

# FAULKNER AND HEMINGWAY

*Biography of a Literary Rivalry*

JOSEPH FRUSCIONE



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS • COLUMBUS

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Fruscione, Joseph, 1974–

Faulkner and Hemingway : biography of a literary rivalry / Joseph Fruscione.  
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN-13: 978-0-8142-1174-8 (cloth : alk. paper)

ISBN-10: 0-8142-1174-7 (cloth : alk. paper)

ISBN-13: 978-0-8142-9275-4 (cd-rom)

1. Literary quarrels—United States—20th century. 2. Faulkner, William, 1897–1962—Criticism and interpretation. 3. Faulkner, William, 1897–1962—Contemporaries. 4. Hemingway, Ernest, 1899–1961—Criticism and interpretation. 5. Hemingway, Ernest, 1899–1961—Contemporaries.  
I. Title.

PS138.F78 2012

813'.5209—dc23

2011023252

This book is available in the following editions:

Cloth (ISBN 978-0-8142-1174-8)

CD-ROM (ISBN 978-0-8142-9275-4)

Cover design by Greg Betza

Type set in Adobe Minion

Text design and typesetting by Jennifer Shoffey Forsythe

Printed by Thomson-Shore, Inc.

♾️ The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of the American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials. ANSI Z39.48–1992.

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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## Acknowledgments

Support comes in many forms.

Joanna Hildebrand Craig deserves more credit than words can say. From the time she first expressed interest in publishing my Faulkner–Hemingway project in 2004—mid-dissertation, awkward graduate student stage—she has been enormously helpful and supportive in giving feedback, providing advice, answering questions, answering more questions, and helping me prepare and then shop the manuscript. Academic publishing has been—and, one hopes, will continue to be—better for her involvement.

At The Ohio State University Press, I thank Sandy Crooms, Malcolm Litchfield, Eugene O'Connor, and Laurie Avery for their hard work, support, and helpful answers to my many questions. Ed Hatton did a superb copy-editing job at the beginning of the production stage; I used to pride myself on having a sharp eye for detail until I saw Ed's edits. My two anonymous peer reviewers also gave excellent feedback when asked to comment on the manuscript in the spring–summer of 2010. Sandy Crooms deserves additional credit for taking a chance on a manuscript where others had passed. To paraphrase an early Faulkner dedication, I hope this book will give her no reason to regret that fact.

At my two institutions, many colleagues have been supportive and encouraging, among them: Maureen Corrigan, Leona Fisher, Patricia O'Connor, Ricardo Ortiz, Christine So, Dennis Todd, Norma Tilden, John Glavin, and Carole Sargent at Georgetown; and, at GW, Katherine Larsen, Derek Malone-France, Phyllis Ryder, Heather Schell, Jeffrey Cohen, and Ormond Seavey (who told me to “get it right”—hopefully I have). I'm very grateful to Derek Malone-France and the University Writing Program at GW for generous financial support to cover permissions costs. Likewise, I thank Kathryn Temple and Georgetown's English Department for funding

related to conference travel and professional development. My schools' departmental staff—Rebecca Wood and Najiyah Williams at GW, Donna Even-Kesef and Karen Lautman at Georgetown—have always been excellent. A teacher-scholar couldn't ask for better logistical support.

Among my professional colleagues, James Meredith, Suzanne Del Gizzo, Kirk Curnutt, Robert Trogdon, Susan Beegel, Scott Donaldson, Linda Wagner-Martin, Carl Eby, Linda Patterson Miller, Gail Sinclair, J. Gerald Kennedy, Jackson Bryer, Richard Kopley, David Earle, Rai Peterson, Sara Kosiba, and many others have been excellent in their continued encouragement, advice, and support. When I was a second-year Ph.D. student at only my second professional meeting, the late Michael Reynolds bought me a glass of wine at the Hemingway Centennial Conference in July 1999—the first of many gestures of support from my colleagues in the Hemingway Society and elsewhere.

I also want to thank Alyssa Pacy, Stephen Plotkin, and Susan Wrynn of the Kennedy Library for their assistance when I researched Hemingway's archival letters in 2003 and 2004; the Kennedy Library also generously provided a research stipend in 2003. Ronald Berman gave excellent advice after reading Chapter 3 of this book in 2009. I am particularly thankful to H. R. Stoneback for graciously providing me an unpublished paper he gave on Faulkner and Hemingway at MLA in 1988—well before the idea for this book.

I want to give an additional note of thanks The Ernest Hemingway Foundation for permission to quote from unpublished letters in the Hemingway Collection at the Kennedy Library—particularly to Kirk Curnutt for guiding me through the process so smoothly, and for being a model colleague.

My colleagues from the Melville Society Executive Committee—John Bryant, Chris Sten, Mary K. Bercaw Edwards, Samuel Otter, Tony McGowan, Wyn Kelley, and Dennis Berthold—continue to offer great professional support and encouragement, at the same time giving me a worthy model of intellectual exchange and camaraderie. They also let me wear my nineteenth-century Americanist hat once in a while, a much-needed and welcome gesture. I've encountered a similar exchange and camaraderie at the conferences where I've delivered various working sections of this book, including: NEMLA (Buffalo, April 2000), the University of Mississippi (July 2000), the University of Louisville (February 2001), ALA (Cambridge, May 2003), Key West Hemingway (June 2004), and MLA (Philadelphia, December 2006).

Among the earliest feedback on this book project was that of my dissertation and defense committees in August 2005: Kim Moreland, Chris Sten, Margaret Soltan, Robert Combs, Evelyn Schreiber, and Barney Mergen at GW. Kim Moreland was a wonderfully sharp and supportive dissertation

director. James A. Miller has exemplified professionalism and support for the past thirteen years and counting as professor and colleague. Chris Sten, Margaret Soltan, and Evelyn Schreiber have been increasingly supportive and collegial as I've transitioned from graduate student to faculty member at GW. When this project was in its dissertation stage, my colleague Kathleen MacArthur was exceptionally helpful when I was doing archival research in the Hemingway Collection and reading Hemingway's post-1930 letters for references to Faulkner; Kathleen flawlessly transcribed many Hemingway letters for me.

On the home front, my parents and the rest of my family have given me all the support and encouragement I've needed, even when they didn't realize it. A phone call here, a laugh from a niece or nephew there, a "How's that book going?" inquiry, an "I'm going to buy your book when it comes out" promise, or a lot of other things—all of it has been most helpful and most welcome.

And to my lovely wife, Kristen: she joined the process in the middle, but she's really been here all along.





## Introduction

### THE ANXIETY OF AGON

#### *A Short Biography of a Rivalry*

*Bullfighting is worthless without rivalry. But with two great bullfighters it becomes a deadly rivalry. Because when one does something, and can do it regularly, that no one else can do and it is not a trick but a deadly dangerous performance only made possible by perfect nerves, judgment, courage and art and this one increases its deadliness steadily, then the other, if he has any temporary failure of nerves or of judgment, will be gravely wounded or killed if he tries to equal or surpass it. He will have to resort to tricks and when the public learns to tell the tricks from the true thing he will be beaten in the rivalry and he will be very lucky if he is still alive or in the business.*

—Hemingway, *The Dangerous Summer*

If we substituted “bullfighting” with “writing” and “bullfighters” with “writers” in the above passage, then we would begin to understand just how strongly competitiveness shaped Hemingway’s views of writing. He saw bullfighters and writers as motivated by their peers to seek greatness, to follow set codes, and to outperform their contemporaries in professions that, to his mind, were defined by rivalry. Such competitiveness held a certain creative value for him: artists’ attempting “to equal or surpass” their rivals could improve their own work. At the same time, such efforts to outwrite and -chance one’s peers could spawn a mutual psychocompetitive influence. As Hemingway traveled to Spain in 1959 to cover brothers-in-law Antonio Ordóñez and Luis Miguel Dominguín in their *mano a mano* series of bullfights, he was likely thinking of a rivalry between craftsmen of a different sort—that between himself and Faulkner. Since Hemingway’s “prolific” remark in *Death in the Afternoon* (1932), he and Faulkner had been vying for American literary supremacy with competing-yet-complementary sensibilities. At times, each thought

himself the superior craftsman and spoke of the other accordingly, while also admitting a level of respect and literary camaraderie.

The three-plus decade rivalry between William Faulkner (1897–1962) and Ernest Hemingway (1899–1961) was rich, nuanced, and often vexed. It embodied various attitudes: one-upmanship, respect, criticism, and praise. This dialectic of American modernists was manifested textually through their fiction, nonfiction, correspondence, and Nobel Prize addresses. Faulkner and Hemingway used these texts to debate—and spar over—the forms, experimentations, and styles of modernism in America, both indirectly and directly. Their intertextual relationship was unique for both men: it was unusual for the reserved Faulkner to engage so directly and so often with a contemporary, and for the hypercompetitive Hemingway to admit his respect for—and the concomitant possibility of his inferiority to—a rival writer. Commonly, Hemingway’s literary relationships were monochromatic, as in, for instance, his respect for Ezra Pound, or his disdain for John Dos Passos after their friendship disintegrated in the mid-1930s. Likewise, when Hemingway was described as inferior to or derivative of other writers (such as Sherwood Anderson or Gertrude Stein), he distanced himself from and disparaged them because of their influence. His dynamic with Faulkner was different: he simultaneously respected and scorned Faulkner, and Faulkner responded similarly, if a little less harshly. They helped shape each other’s work and aesthetic, manifesting a literary version of what jazz musicians call “trading twelves”—riffing on others’ versions of twelve bars of music in a back-and-forth exchange, much as Faulkner and Hemingway often did in their own writing with a sharp competitive edge.

My central argument, then, is this: their close reading of each other’s works, in tandem with their mixed mutual feelings, spawned an influential, resonant, and sparring body of literature in which each had a psychocompetitive hold on the other. The present examination—part analytical study, part literary biography—of Faulkner and Hemingway illustrates how their artistic paths and principles clashed frequently, as the authors measured themselves against each other for most of their careers. Their allusive novels, nonfiction, letters, and comments, when read together, form a kind of modernist intertext that traces a narrative of intense rivalry, joint psychological influence, riffing, and complementary authorial-masculine performance.

To be clear, I am not suggesting that Faulkner and Hemingway were dominant *artistic* influences in each other’s lives, nor am I arguing that each was the other’s sole creative inspiration or literary model. My focus throughout this study—the first of its kind in book form—will always return to the psychological influence these two writers shared, an influence expressed in their texts, remarks, Nobel Prize addresses, correspondence, and per-

formed selves. I do posit a shared psychological influence in the chapters that follow. This mutual sway did inform some of the authors' stylistic and thematic choices, but it was primarily psychocompetitive, and only secondarily artistic. For better or worse, they are two of the most significant names invoked in discussions of American literature and culture of the twentieth century. Such a longstanding dialectic between writers of this stature, it seems to me, offers numerous opportunities for further discussion, debate, and intellectual exchange, though with less animus than that between the authors themselves.

### RIVALING AMERICAN MODERNISMS

Since Faulkner and Hemingway may have met only once, their writing was their debating platform. Judging by the located correspondence, each talked of meeting the other very infrequently: Hemingway mentioned meeting Faulkner in a July 4, 1952, letter to Harvey Breit; at West Point in April 1962, Faulkner referred to seeing an ill, mentally exhausted Hemingway, but without specifying when and where. It is unlikely that Faulkner would have visited Hemingway at the Mayo Clinic in late 1960 or early 1961, given the seriousness of both men's health at the time and matters of privacy. Their meeting could be a literary moment waiting to be uncovered, possibly one that occurred after 1931 but before 1952: a piece on Faulkner in the November 14, 1931 New York *Herald Tribune* notes that he had never met Hemingway, and Hemingway's July 1952 letter refers to a lone meeting of the authors. No published biographies of either man mention a meeting, which seems at most to have been in passing. Nevertheless, a great many of their letters and texts joust: for instance, Hemingway's *Death in the Afternoon* and Faulkner's *The Wild Palms*, as will be seen in Chapter 2. Through analysis of various texts and contexts (literary and personal), I will delineate how Faulkner and Hemingway pushed each other to excel and innovate their respective crafts of fiction. This shared motivation and desire to be America's definitive modernist, I argue throughout, engendered a mutual psychological influence. Oftentimes, each wanted to outshine his rival; in turn, bringing their mutually referential texts under review will reveal how they were locked in a competition throughout their writing lives, a competition in which—in their minds, and possibly in the academy's—Faulkner seems to have prevailed.

During their long careers, Faulkner's and Hemingway's writing lives intersected often, significantly, and complexly. Mutually hyperconscious, they spoke and wrote of each other in public remarks and correspondence,

alluded to each other in their fiction and nonfiction, and read each other's works shrewdly. Likewise, their personal libraries reveal an acute awareness: Hemingway's included *Absalom, Absalom!*, *As I Lay Dying*, *Big Woods*, *Collected Stories*, *A Fable*, *Go Down, Moses*, *The Wild Palms*, *Light in August*, *The Mansion*, *The Portable Faulkner*, *Pylon*, *Sanctuary*, *Soldiers' Pay*, and *The Unvanquished* in his Key West and Cuba holdings.<sup>1</sup> Faulkner's included *The Fifth Column*, *Green Hills of Africa*, *The Short Stories*, and *To Have and Have Not* on his shelves at Rowan Oak,<sup>2</sup> in addition to uncorrected proofs of *The Old Man and the Sea* now housed at the University of Virginia's Small Library. With the exception of *The Sound and the Fury*, Hemingway seems to have owned all of Faulkner's major works. On his part, Faulkner had a peculiar collection of Hemingway's work—most notably absent from his shelves as far as we know from Blotner's work were Hemingway's three finest novels, *The Sun Also Rises*, *A Farewell to Arms*, and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. He was nonetheless familiar with their content: he echoed *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms* in *The Wild Palms*, *A Farewell to Arms* in his Nobel Prize address, and aspects of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* in *The Bear*, *Requiem for a Nun*, and *The Mansion*. They knew of each other's writings and held remarkable sway over each other's competitive ego. As such, their writings evince how each writer was present in the other's work—figuratively through parallel themes and allusively through direct, sometimes barbed references.

For two writers who had very limited, or no, social contact, Hemingway and Faulkner assumed integral roles in each other's writing lives. America's rivaling modernists were often at artistic odds over matters of avant-garde style, structure, setting, and theme; each thought his own choices were better than the other's different choices. Their works join some of American modernism's extremes—verbosity and minimalism, all-inclusiveness and omission, and American provinciality and transnationality, as Earl Ro vit aptly suggested at the 1999 Hemingway Centennial Conference. That their styles, structures, and settings were simultaneously divergent and complementary led to an acrimonious and long-lasting rivalry, as George Monteiro observed at the Hemingway Centennial Conference vis-à-vis their warring Nobel Prize addresses. Despite their different but equally innovative methods of modernist writing, they also shared key subject matter: hunting, war, a reverence for nature, and personal and artistic explorations of gender, creating a mutual but debating oeuvre of fiction, nonfiction, and correspondence.

Besides owning some of each other's books, Faulkner and Hemingway were often anxious to read each other's work and public statements, and even

1. Reynolds, *Hemingway's Reading*, 123; Brasch and Sigman, 119–20.

2. Blotner, *William Faulkner's Library*, 36.

more anxious to respond in their own work, creating a rich intertextual matrix of mutual influence, guarded respect, and professional anxiety. While certain textual and contextual parallels between the authors have been examined in biographies and other scholarly works, little past scholarship has plotted the expansive grid I offer here. Every statement that Faulkner and Hemingway made about each other was part of a larger context spanning some thirty years. Of course, the authors' individual importance to an American canon is inarguable. Examining their interrelations can add to what we know of these influential authors—for instance, the provincial Faulkner's recurring engagements with a fellow writer, the competitive Hemingway's insecurities and anxieties vis-à-vis Faulkner (which he would always try to suppress), and the nuanced interaction between two mutually influential authors who were involved in more than a monomorphic literary feud.

As rival modernists and artistic foils, Hemingway and Faulkner regularly referred to each other when discussing writing as a craft, as in Hemingway's *Death in the Afternoon* or their Nobel Prize addresses. Most of their joint criticisms centered on aesthetics and degrees of experimentation, despite Hemingway's many *ad hominem* comments. Their aesthetic standards governed what they wrote, thought, and said about each other; as might be expected, both men evaluated each other's work through their personal artistic prisms. Hemingway frequently disparaged Faulkner's apparent lack of stylistic control and suggested that Faulkner's writing would be better if it were pared down and disciplined; Faulkner often reproached Hemingway for not taking as many chances as he himself did with sentence length, narrative opacity, stream of consciousness, and nonlinearity. In this sense, their exchange and ways of shaping and innovating American literature effected a symbolic modernist collage, comprised of different ways to "Make it new," so to speak. Theirs was a competition between two writers who acknowledged, challenged, and augmented each other's individual artistic worth.

Throughout Faulkner's oeuvre, "each novel in combination with the preceding ones exerts a visible force on the next, the challenge to resist, to modify, to be 'original' increases at each new stage of literary creation."<sup>3</sup> The same can be said of Faulkner's rivalry with Hemingway; each would come to represent a similar "visible force" and "challenge" to the other's professional self-esteem, as evidenced by what might be called their collaborative modernist intertext. As Hemingway would do with him, Faulkner wanted to out-innovate Hemingway and their peers, to be "the best in America, by God" as he told Robert Haas in 1939.<sup>4</sup> He likewise struck a confident and über-creative pose in his 1956 interview with Jean Stein for the *Paris Review*:

3. Watson, 145.

4. Faulkner, *Selected Letters of William Faulkner*, 113.

"I created a cosmos of my own. I can move these people around like God, not only in space but in time, too."<sup>5</sup> This "figure of the artist as God," Watson posits, is an "explicitly performative statement" in which Faulkner's self-presentation as a godlike creator impelled him to manipulate and reshape the sources of his fiction—family and local stories, Southern history, his own life, and aspects of Hemingway's oeuvre in such works as *The Mansion* and "Race at Morning." Expressly in *Absalom, Absalom!* and more broadly in other works, he "asserted artistic freedom [ . . . ] and authorial sovereignty over his fictional domain."<sup>6</sup> Like Quentin Compson in *Absalom, Absalom!*, Faulkner "selects and arranges his material to give it expressive historical form in a new context."<sup>7</sup> In this sense, Faulkner's was an aesthetics of revision: of his own texts; stories he had known, invented, or experienced; and Hemingway's competing works.

Hemingway, too, had aspirations to be "the best in America, by God"; at times, he felt superior to other writers in output, integrity, masculinity, and dedication to craft. As he described his quest for honest and palpable writing in *Green Hills of Africa* to Max Perkins in November 1934: "It is as hard to do as paint a Cézanne—and I'm the only bastard right now who can do it," unlike "my overassessed and underbrained contemporaries, your World Geniuses" he mentioned but did not name in another letter to Perkins four days earlier.<sup>8</sup> Hemingway measured his own professional worth against his contemporaries, most extendedly and complexly Faulkner's. Of his contemporaries, Faulkner "brought out his competitive instincts [most] powerfully," Scott Donaldson observes. They "must have been aware that they were engaged in a contest for literary preeminence in their own country and their own time," engendering an "inevitable tension between them" that, I argue, is symbolically narrated in much of their published and unpublished work.<sup>9</sup>

Studying Hemingway and Faulkner closely illustrates how they developed and explored their artistic ideas through thesis and antithesis (the call-and-response format of some texts) as well as synthesis (the myriad connections, allusions, and similarities between them). In light of their respective prominence, the authors often defined themselves against each other and illustrated "how powerful are the profound urgencies that drive true creativity," but occasionally with some emotion and "crude" remarks.<sup>10</sup> Their individual creativity stemmed from creative acumen and ability: their strong management of dialogue, personal emotional torment transferred to and transformed in their characters, and mode of remembering, reshaping, and

5. Qtd. in Cowley, *Writers at Work*, 141.

6. Watson, 136, 149.

7. *Ibid.*, 148.

8. Bruccoli, *The Only Thing That Counts*, 216, 214.

9. Donaldson, *By Force of Will*, 251.

10. Rovit and Waldhorn, 158.

stylizing experience. At another level, each man's awareness of the other's artistic viability impelled him to cultivate and enhance his work further. Though they assailed each other in print, Hemingway and Faulkner also communicated through their texts via shared images, themes, and (guarded) compliments. Their engagement manifested what Harold Bloom calls in *The Anxiety of Influence* the "dialectic between art and art" inherent in such authorial relationships. Hemingway and Faulkner were concurrently fellow modernists and competitors who incarnated the "agonistic basis of all imaginative literature"—they produced a wealth of work that is a study in contrasts, conflicts, and psychological influence.<sup>11</sup>

In this project, I examine the tense, shared, and psychological influence between Faulkner and Hemingway in an intragenerational context, coupled with notions of rivalry and masculine performativity. Their competition was multi-dimensioned and long lasting, demonstrating how they influenced each other literarily and, more so, psychologically. Literarily, Faulkner and Hemingway impacted some of each other's work. Faulkner did not lead Hemingway to his minimalism, and Hemingway did not lead Faulkner to his loquaciousness and epicity. Nevertheless, each man's writings and ideas could inform the other's and their intertextual duel. Once they became highly conscious of each other in the 1930s, certain artistic choices were, to a degree, dictated by this mutual awareness. Would Hemingway have, as he wrote to Faulkner in July 1947, enhanced his chance-taking in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* if not in part for his quest to outdo him? Likewise, *Across the River and into the Trees*, *The Old Man and the Sea*, and his numerous unfinished works of the 1950s point toward the same kind of chance-taking, an act that Faulkner's presence and prodigiousness stimulated in Hemingway. Similarly, Faulkner arranged *The Wild Palms* with Hemingway in mind. A symbolic microcosm of this rivalry, the book's point-counterpoint structure would not have the same contextual resonance without all of its conscious allusions to Hemingway, which show Faulkner offering his vision of their complex relationship. Most notably, their Nobel Prize addresses—arguably their principal aesthetic declarations—would have been markedly different without the two decades dialectical interaction, direct and oblique allusions, adaptation, wordplay, and quotation preceding them.

Beyond such artistic influence lay an even stronger psychocompetitive influence. Each modernist aspired to be the uppermost American writer, inevitably at the other's expense. In terms of popularity and financial success, Hemingway was definitively prominent; in terms of artistic value, they vied for prominence. When Faulkner started to eclipse Hemingway in the early 1950s with numerous awards, more books, and international

11. Bloom, 99, xxiv.



acclaim, his feelings of superiority were countered by Hemingway's feelings of insecurity, anxiety, and defensiveness. Faulkner wanted to surpass Hemingway, so he could not let the criticism of him in *Death in the Afternoon* go without countering it in *The Wild Palms*. Perhaps Faulkner would not have responded if an inferior—and less psychologically influential—writer had levied the same criticism of his productivity. Likewise, Faulkner's 1947 ranking of Hemingway would not have stung the latter so much had it come from one of his perceived inferiors. While each postured against the other, Hemingway was more explicitly threatened by Faulkner than the reverse, hence his recurrent hostility. It was typical for Hemingway to denigrate those writers whom he knew were good, even better than he. Some of his actions and comments about Faulkner reveal a certain insecurity that Faulkner, to a lesser degree, could share. Had they not wanted to outdo one another, they may not have engaged and dueled with each other so sharply and for so many years.

As decades of Hemingway scholarship have established, Hemingway's relationships with his contemporaries embodied a sharp sense of conflict. He wanted to eclipse Stein, Fitzgerald, Dos Passos, Steinbeck, Faulkner, and the rest of his American modernist peers. Faulkner, too, situated himself vis-à-vis his generation agonistically; his competitiveness, more understated and indirect than Hemingway's, was still quite strong. As these would-be archetypal modernists saw it, a way to effect newness was to experiment and take their art in directions untried by their predecessors, even by themselves. Another way Faulkner and Hemingway sought such avant-gardism was to disassociate themselves from literary tradition through misreading, revision, and a competitive worldview. These related notions of authorial self and literary craft are significant to my critical treatment of how two American modernists traded influence, when a "radical dissatisfaction with the artistic past" was thought to require rich innovation.<sup>12</sup> Such artistic "dissatisfaction," at some level, sparked their need to revise tradition. This need framed virtually every facet of the Faulkner-Hemingway rivalry: textual (mis)readings and jousting; comments in letters; their dynamic of one-upmanship; and their broader opinions of each other.

Although both writers were aware of and somewhat unsettled by this psychocompetitive influence, Hemingway felt an attendant anxiety more acutely than Faulkner did. Because Hemingway saw writing as a contest and, as such, wanted to cut down his seeming opponents, he strongly denied most outside influence. While Hemingway was always the more celebrated and affluent writer, indeed the quintessential writer-as-celebrity, Faulkner

12. Bradbury and McFarlane, "The Name and Nature of Modernism," 28.



by and large emerged as the better artist of the two by their careers' end—at least in the eyes of the authors themselves, thus some of their attitudes. On his part, Faulkner respected Hemingway and praised him on occasion, but he was typically reserved in responding to Hemingway's criticisms. Regardless of his importance and success, Hemingway could feel inferior to Faulkner, as demonstrated by his insecurity and overreactions to anything linking them, such as Faulkner's assessments of his work, or his potential superiority, as when he won the Nobel Prize first. Hemingway was loath to admit another's superiority, occasionally denying any derivativeness or inferiority with marked hostility. Donald Ogden Stewart, one of his companions during their Paris years, was aware of Hemingway's treatment of his friends and fellow writers. In a 1972 interview, Stewart recalled the volatile dynamic between Hemingway and his writing friends—who were, in Hemingway's mind, rival writers first:

[T]he minute he began to love you, or the minute he began to have some sort of an obligation to you of love or friendship or something, then is when he had to kill you. Then you were too close to something that he was protecting. He, one-by-one, knocked off the best friendships he ever had. He did it with Scott; he did it with Dos Passos—with everybody. I think that it was a psychological fear he had that you might ask something from him. He didn't want to be overdrawn at your bank.<sup>13</sup>

Stewart captures Hemingway's stridently competitive personality vis-à-vis friends who were also writers, particularly those to whom he felt indebted. For instance, Fitzgerald helped him switch publishers from Boni and Liveright to Scribners in 1926, and Hemingway eventually responded by condescendingly treating Fitzgerald in "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" and *A Moveable Feast* as a writer who sacrificed his talent for money and for his needy, domineering wife. In *A Moveable Feast*, furthermore, Hemingway declared his creative autonomy concerning Fitzgerald's guidance on *The Sun Also Rises*: "I do not remember when I showed finished things to him first [ . . . ] nor when he first saw the proofs on the rewritten and cut version. We discussed them. But I made the decisions. Not that it matters"<sup>14</sup>—except that it did matter to Hemingway. Greatly.

The same can be said of Hemingway's handling of Anderson and Stein, two of his early mentors who found themselves the targets of his invective in, respectively, *The Torrents of Spring* and *A Moveable Feast*. Although Hemingway did not have the same kind of social relationship with Faulkner

13. Qtd. in Bruccoli, *The Fitzgerald/Hemingway Annual*, 85.

14. Hemingway, *A Moveable Feast*, 158.

as he did with other contemporaries, his treatment of Faulkner stemmed from similar attitudes. He was not indebted to Faulkner for introducing him to literary Paris as he was to Anderson, but he increasingly felt less significant artistically, which cloaked his own popularity, abilities, and acclaim. Faulkner seems to have sensed a similar dynamic, that he himself had achieved less wealth and popularity but more artistic value.

Hemingway and Faulkner were keenly aware of each other's artistic contributions and experiments. Each saw the other as his staunchest adversary; one can see their strong egos and shared influence imprinted on a variety of texts that acknowledge what the writers did not, at least overtly. In this sense, Dennis Brown's *Intertextual Dynamics within the Literary Group* offers a useful model for examining writers' influence and exchange in an intragenerational context. In particular, Brown studies the rich, longstanding intertextuality between Joyce, Pound, Eliot, and Lewis. He analyzes the impact of *Ulysses* on both *The Waste Land* and the *Cantos* in terms of style, imagery, and themes; likewise, he locates "aspects of *Ulysses*" in Lewis's *Enemy of the Stars* and *Tarr*.<sup>15</sup> For Brown,

[T]he main literary texts of the Men of 1914 [ . . . ] should, in important ways, be considered less in terms of individual stylistic development than as a series of moves within an overall intertextual group-game. The game, built up in terms of mutual appreciation and rivalry over some fifty years in all, is predicated on a common assumption—that each writer is involved in a concerted project to create new literature for the new age, our own.<sup>16</sup>

Faulkner and Hemingway engaged in an analogous "intertextual group-game" with similar attitudes of "mutual appreciation and rivalry." Brown's framework helps outline the nuanced ways in which the Faulkner-Hemingway intertextuality formed an artistic relationship between them, more or less concomitant with their European counterparts. Brown also argues that the Men of 1914's intertextuality was rooted in "creatively-aware levels" and "unconscious behavioural interchange," just as Faulkner and Hemingway consciously and unconsciously dueled. And, although the authors were social acquaintances,

[T]he power of group-feeling was essentially provided by the fantasy fellowship and rivalry generated by Pound's primarily-mental construct, which associated them together as the four leading writers of their generation—

15. Brown, 3.

16. *Ibid.*, 1.

and, indeed, the four men would communicate to each other far more in terms of their literary texts than their table-talk.<sup>17</sup>

As such, coeval artistic relationships are informed by but independent of social relationships. Contextually, it was important that Pound helped Eliot edit and revise *The Waste Land* in the early 1920s, but their intertextuality and the larger “symmetry of the group” would have existed without such counsel.<sup>18</sup> Brown sees Eliot’s poem as a convergence of these four authors’ “aims and energies”: the opening suggests Lewis’s *Tarr*, the poem’s motifs of death and aridity borrow from the “Calypso” section of *Ulysses*, and Pound’s editorial work improved the poem, all of which turned it into a figurative “group production.”<sup>19</sup> Brown locates the primary importance of this somewhat competitive “fourway dynamic” in their texts.

Relatedly, the Faulkner–Hemingway rivalry was another “primarily-mental construct.” The authors jostled textually in what was a multileveled artistic rivalry between the two “leading writers of their generation” in the American milieu. For Brown’s *Men* of 1914 and, by extension, Faulkner and Hemingway, their works take part in “recapitulating mutual group-dynamics and [abound] in intertextual reference”; their “game” is flush with cross-referencing and recasting, complete with the competitiveness and dual motivation connoted by *game*.<sup>20</sup> This paradigm of self-aware intertextuality among contemporaries will help illustrate why and how Faulkner’s and Hemingway’s evaluations of one another as modernists and influences found exclusive expression in their writing, occasionally articulated with sports metaphors and language. In large part, they were highly aware of themselves as the era’s prominent and dueling male writers. Their intertextual influence and rivalry crystallizes further when viewed through a related prism—their sense of themselves as men.

## “TO BE A CHAMPION” AND A MAN

“Shifts in gender relations at the turn of the century were a key factor in the emergence of Modernism.” In addition to being a time of artistic revolution, the modernist era also saw new social attitudes emerge: for example, Alain Locke’s *New Negro*, the Flapper, and the New Woman. The “radical implications of the social-cultural changes feminism advocated,” Marianne

17. *Ibid.*, 2, 4.

18. *Ibid.*, 4.

19. *Ibid.*, 97–99.

20. *Ibid.*, 4.

DeKoven continues, “produced in modernist writing an unprecedented preoccupation with gender, both thematically and formally.”<sup>21</sup> During this time of social and artistic upheaval, authors became more aware of how their constructs of gender intersected with their writing and aesthetic principles. Virginia Woolf, Gertrude Stein, and others were conscious of their gendered identities and othered sexuality (bisexuality and lesbianism, respectively), which is apparent in much of their writings and ideas—see, for example, *Mrs. Dalloway*, *Orlando*, and *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*.

During the modernist era, art and gender roles were being actively remade and rethought, as the works of Woolf, Stein, D. H. Lawrence, H. D., and many others demonstrate. Faulkner and Hemingway were likewise sharply attuned to their roles as male modernist authors; their notions of gender and performances as twentieth-century American men overlap with their shared influence and intertextuality. Gender, particularly their ideas of masculinity, was an important component of their literary experiments, personae, and attitudes toward one another as they enacted similar models of the masculine. Such “*stylized repetition of acts*,” Judith Butler posits more generally, enables men to “perform” their masculine self-images. Butler further associates gender with conscious performance:

[T]he action of gender requires a performance that is *repeated*. This repetition is at once a reenactment and reexperiencing of a set of meanings already socially established[ . . . ] Although there are individual bodies that enact these significations by becoming stylized into gendered modes, this “action” is a public action.

One sees a version of this performative model in Hemingway’s and Faulkner’s lifelong public posturing, or “sustained social performances” in Butler’s sense.<sup>22</sup> As an authorial celebrity, Hemingway was in the public eye much more than Faulkner, yet both men adopted and performed similar personae—wounded veteran, hunter, outdoorsman, paterfamilias (“Papa” Hemingway, “Pappy” Faulkner), adulterer, and competitive male writer. In concert with their competitive professional awareness, such “public action” further shaped their writing, relationship, and reception by readers and the public.

Despite their similar public masculinities, the two men enacted their roles differently. Hemingway, the über-macho celebrity writer, was staunchly competitive with other writers (both dead and alive), and he publicly associated himself with dangerous, rugged activities where courage was requisite:

21. DeKoven, 174.

22. Butler, 140, 141.

war, bullfighting, big-game hunting, boxing, and deep-sea fishing. “Over time,” Scott Donaldson reminds us, “Hemingway became a celebrity rather than a famous writer,” “a legendary figure” who nonetheless managed his career and publicity rather well.<sup>23</sup> His masculine self-image also affected his relations with family, wives, friends, fellow writers, and critics, toward all of whom he could direct his aggressive and controlling personality. As a writer *qua* sportsman, Hemingway defined his authorial role in terms of sport, often boxing, baseball, and horseracing, thus intertwining his writing and self-image as an active, competitive man. As he wrote to Charles Scribner in September 1949, he wanted to be seen as the “champion of the world”—the writing world, that is:

Mr. Henry James I would just thumb him once the first time he grabbed and then hit him once where he had no balls and ask the referee to stop it.

There are some guys nobody could ever beat like Mr. Shakespeare (The Champion) and Mr. Anonymous. But would be glad any time, if in training, to go twenty with Mr. Cervantes in his own home town (Alcala de Henares) and beat the shit out of him. Although Mr. C. very smart and would be learning all the time and would probably beat you in a return match. The *third* fight people would pay to see. Plenty peoples.

[ . . . ]

Know this sounds like bragging but Jeezoo Chrise you have to have confidence to be a champion and that is the only thing I ever wished to be.<sup>24</sup>

Despite some facetiousness here, Hemingway’s competitiveness was often in overdrive, pushing him in this letter and elsewhere to challenge Melville, Dostoyevsky, Turgenyev, Maupassant, and others he saw as worthy models. Hemingway presents himself here as the macho, pugilistic writer prepared to challenge virtually anyone for aesthetic supremacy, Messrs. Shakespeare, Tolstoy, and “Anonymous” excepted. By extension, that James “had no balls” speaks to how Hemingway braided masculinity and art—he felt superior to James as a writer and as a man. He had made a snide reference to James and his (possibly) injured genitalia in *The Sun Also Rises*, when Jake and Bill discuss Jake’s own injury in Chapter 12: “I just had an accident,” Jake says, to which Bill responds “That’s the sort of thing that can’t be spoken of. That’s what you ought to work up into a mystery. Like Henry’s bicycle.”<sup>25</sup> As Michael Reynolds reminds us, “Ford Madox Ford, who had known James, told Ernest that James had suffered some sexual wounding that left him unfit

23. Donaldson, *By Force of Will*, 12, 1.

24. Hemingway, *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters*, 673.

25. Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises*, 120.

for the Civil War and unfit for marriage” and that the typescript read “Henry James” instead of “Henry’s”; such a potshot is indicative of Hemingway’s “literary feud with the past,” as much of the above letter shows as well.<sup>26</sup> Highly aware of his own masculinity, Hemingway likewise wanted to publicize it, hence his “self-conscious literary braggadocio” as self-professed “literary heavyweight champion,” as Rena Sanderson has fittingly termed it.<sup>27</sup>

Hemingway’s gender sensibility was in constant flux. At times he felt himself to be the hypermasculine, hyper-public writer; at others he felt insecure when his writing was questioned. He often expressed his insecurities through self-aware displays of his sense of masculinity, such as responding to criticisms with threatened or, on a few occasions, real violence—namely, that against Max Eastman and Wallace Stevens in the 1930s. Since Hemingway interwove writing and masculinity, he sometimes interpreted his secondary artistic status vis-à-vis Faulkner as a slight against his masculine self-image. Hemingway seemed to feel, or fear feeling, “feminized” by Faulkner’s artistic dominance in the 1950s, as Faulkner won numerous awards and received much more artistic acclaim. His response was to feminize Faulkner, as a few letters indicate. As Robert Trogdon has recently shown in *The Lousy Racket*, Hemingway even referred to edits of obscenities made to his manuscripts as a kind of emasculation.<sup>28</sup> Because Hemingway interpreted his writing—and threats to it—as a bellwether of his masculinity, he overreacted in stereotypically masculine ways to anything suggesting his inferiority to Faulkner, once going so far as to imagine a duel between them.

For his part, Faulkner also felt himself to be in a mano a mano bout with Hemingway, but much less pugnaciously and apprehensively. Like Hemingway, Faulkner was a devoted hunter and outdoorsman throughout his life, and he enjoyed such male-bonding experiences. Yet, he did not publicly associate himself with these traditionally male activities to the extremes that Hemingway did. Oxford locals knew of Faulkner’s outdoor activities, but there were few, if any, national-magazine pictorials of Faulkner hunting in southern Mississippi. (Ironically, the July 14, 1961, issue of *Life* commemorating Hemingway also included a story about Faulkner as both writer-in-residence at the University of Virginia and avid fox hunter, yet another textual intersection.) Faulkner’s love of hunting, horses, and the natural world shaped and inspired his art, but he did not feel as strong a need to overperform his masculinity, hence his not writing feature journalism pieces chronicling his outdoors exploits as Hemingway did. Although Faulkner did not act with a boastful, macho swagger, he publicly enacted his manhood

26. Reynolds, *Hemingway: The Homecoming*, 18, 225n6.

27. Sanderson, 170.

28. Trogdon, 69, *passim*.

through the roles of wounded soldier, hunter, patriarch, adulterous husband, and writer.

Faulkner also coupled writing and gender, but not as inextricably. For instance, he repeatedly stressed that his 1947 ranking of Hemingway as the era's fourth-best writer was a criticism of Hemingway's artistry, not masculinity, regardless of Hemingway's conflation of *man* and *author*. When criticizing Hemingway's writing, he focused almost exclusively on what he saw as its artistic shortcomings without resorting to *ad hominem* commentary. Unlike Hemingway, Faulkner interpreted criticisms of his writing largely along aesthetic lines, not as attacks against his manhood, in part because he felt himself to be a better writer and in part because he was seemingly more secure in his masculinity. Although he may have been envious of Hemingway's greater fame and wealth to some degree, Faulkner was not as explicitly anxious about Hemingway as the latter was of him. Yet, his sense of his own masculinity shaped his views and textual treatment of Hemingway.

Faulkner and Hemingway may have looked at and projected themselves as men differently, but they both knowingly performed their culturally constructed definitions of the masculine in their works and public personae. Relatedly, both were competitive and wanted to outdo each other as artists, to be *the* author of their milieu. One rarely sees female writers engaging in the same kind of adversarial relations as Faulkner and Hemingway or, later, Tom Wolfe, Norman Mailer, Gore Vidal, and John Updike, or Ralph Ellison and Richard Wright, or Mailer and other of his contemporaries. Such fierce competitiveness and one-upmanship seems especially prevalent between male writers. Surely, female writers feel a sense of competitiveness with one another, but the mentality of rivalry is more marked in interactions between male writers, largely because men are socially constructed to be more aggressive and confrontational.

Artists at all levels regularly experience some form of mutual rivalry and exchange, and such dynamics generally blend respect, animus, and one-upmanship. As with any relationship between contemporaries—Poe and Longfellow, or Wright, Ellison, and Baldwin—the Hemingway–Faulkner rivalry was polychromatic and volatile. They were quick to express praise, even quicker to express criticism or take umbrage, but are nevertheless linked by their competing and jointly influential artistic sensibilities. As Earl Rovit has suggested, “Each studied the other’s work with the keenest interest; each was strongly influenced by the other’s style, range, and public persona; and both together created an interlocked dialectic which formed a constellation within which their contemporaries orbited.”<sup>29</sup> As contempo-

29. Rovit, “The Hemingway–Faulkner Generation.”

raries, Faulkner and Hemingway felt a sense of rivalry and competition; as artists, they shared respect, admiration, and influence: this uneasy balance underpinned the three-plus decades of their competitive relationship.



While it is more common to see Hemingway paired with F. Scott Fitzgerald in studies examining social and artistic relationships, Hemingway and Faulkner were linked artistically, psychocompetitively, and intellectually. Although their writing styles, aesthetic philosophies, and personal experiences are easily paired contradistinctively, their strong similarities and psychological influence counterbalance such differences. Despite the vast scholarship on each author, the Faulkner–Hemingway rivalry has not received such thorough critical treatment as I want to offer here.<sup>30</sup> As of late 2011, there have been only two book-length studies—Linda Welshimer Wagner’s *Hemingway and Faulkner: Inventors/Masters* (1975) and Earl Rovit and Arthur Waldhorn’s edited volume, *Hemingway and Faulkner in Their Time* (2005), which collects assessments of the authors by their contemporaries and themselves. Wagner’s book is useful as a separate treatment of Hemingway and Faulkner; she alternately examines their careers, the development and textual expression of their aesthetic principles, and how their late works dovetail with their early works structurally and thematically. Though Wagner does not examine them simultaneously as modernist competitors, her work is nonetheless valuable in its view of the authors’ important “devotion to literature” in their “search for innovation” and, I would add, in their appraisals of each other.<sup>31</sup>

Though there are few books discussing Hemingway and Faulkner, there are several important articles, chapters, essays, and sections of books. Many biographies of the authors address particular episodes and comments: Carlos Baker’s *Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story* (1969), Joseph Blotner’s *Faulkner* (1974, 1991), Frederick Karl’s *William Faulkner: American Writer* (1989), Jay Parini’s *One Matchless Time* (2004), and the late Michael Reynolds’s series, most notably *Hemingway: The Final Years* (1999). Recently, Keith Gandal’s *The Gun and the Pen: Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Faulkner and the Fiction of Mobilization* (2008) offers persuasive readings of *The Sun Also Rises*, *The Great Gatsby*, and *The Sound and the Fury*, though largely as texts

30. Some of the earlier critical treatments may have been unavoidably limited in terms of archival study because the Hemingway Collection at Boston’s John F. Kennedy Library was not opened until 1980. The Kennedy Library, in particular, has been an invaluable resource for me, enabling me to examine many of Hemingway’s unpublished letters for their references to Faulkner.

31. Wagner, viii, vii.



responding to the masculine and militaristic codes of their era. Sections of David Earle's *Re-Covering Modernism: Pulps, Paperbacks, and the Prejudice of Form* (2009) convincingly discuss Faulkner's and Hemingway's involvement with pulpism and popular magazines, seen especially through *Sanctuary*, *Pylon*, *The Wild Palms*, *To Have and Have Not*, and the numerous—often salacious—paperback editions of their works.

Among less recent but still influential Faulkner–Hemingway scholarship is: Floyd C. Watkins's *Flesh and the Word: Eliot, Hemingway, Faulkner* (1971), Thomas McHaney's *William Faulkner's The Wild Palms* (1975), John H. Howell's "Hemingway, Faulkner, and 'The Bear'" (1980), and Peter Hays's "Exchange between Rivals: Faulkner's Influence on *The Old Man and the Sea*" (1984). Other scholarly works have examined particular manifestations of this rivalry and its shared influence-anxiety, such as Herman Prescott's short "Hemingway vs. Faulkner: An Intriguing Feud" (1975), Richard Walsler's "On Faulkner's Putting Wolfe First" (1979), Dieter Meindl's "Hemingway and Faulkner: Companions in Modernism" (1985), H. R. Stoneback's "The Poisoned Spring and the Yellow Flood" (unpublished paper, MLA 1988), and David Timms's "Contrasts in Form" (1989). In more recent years, aspects of this complex relationship have been examined in: Earl Rovit's "The Hemingway–Faulkner Generation" (Hemingway Centennial Conference, 1999), George Monteiro's "The Contest between Faulkner and Hemingway" (Hemingway Centennial Conference, 1999), Monteiro's "The Faulkner–Hemingway Rivalry" (2002), Steven Carter's "Note on Hemingway's 'Ten Indians' and Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*" (2001), and Manuel Broncano's "Reading Faulkner in Spain, Reading Spain in Faulkner" (2009).

Even though some works—Malcolm Cowley's *The Faulkner–Cowley File* (1966) and the articles by McHaney, Howell, Hays, and others—acknowledge textual similarities, they tend to be more implicit in encouraging a broader view of Faulkner and Hemingway as longtime rivals. At least recently, Rovit and Monteiro seem to have been the most explicit in taking a longer view. While building on such scholarship, I want to offer an even more overt study of how these authors' bodies of work—published and archival—trace a sequence of psychological influence, cross-textual reference, and gender that demonstrates convincingly how they competed for artistic primacy and figuratively authored a multivalenced, multi-toned intertext.



*Faulkner and Hemingway* opens with four chronological chapters and closes with a more concluding chapter, each isolating a particular period of the Faulkner–Hemingway contest. Chapter 1, "Modernism, Postwar Manhood,

and the Individual Talent: Maturing in the 1920s,” establishes a literary context, delineating the models of modernism that Hemingway and Faulkner followed in their own work and in their appraisals of each other. This chapter considers the authors’ early writing lives—their experiences during World War One, (embellished) personas as heroic veterans, and respective apprenticeships to Sherwood Anderson. During the 1920s, both writers matured artistically, began to hone their aesthetic theories, and published their first masterpieces, *The Sound and the Fury* and *A Farewell to Arms*, within ten days of each other in 1929. During these fertile years, Anderson supported each writer but met largely with satire in return: Hemingway’s *The Torrents of Spring*, Faulkner’s *Sherwood Anderson and Other Famous Creoles and Mosquitoes*, and other comments each made about Anderson, all of which reveal a common anxiety over his influence on their lives, writings, and authorial self-constructs. This decade’s links—similar masculine personas and Anderson—occurred when Faulkner and Hemingway were making some of the same choices: trying to craft innovative and individual styles, performing as wounded soldiers in their respective home states, and situating themselves in their milieu in somewhat competitive terms.

Chapter 2, “Petulant Jibes, Catfishlike Uncatfishivity, and Hemingwaves: The Rivalry Escalates in the 1930s,” examines how, as their artistic stature and careers as public authors rose, Hemingway and Faulkner became competitively aware of each other. Concurrently, they became involved with Hollywood (Faulkner as a screenwriter; Hemingway as adapted author), and they were published together in Faulkner’s poetry collection *Salmagundi*, which contained Hemingway’s early poem “Ultimately.” During this decade, references and criticisms in their letters, *Death in the Afternoon*, *Pylon*, Hemingway’s “On Being Shot Again” (*Esquire*, June 1935), and *The Wild Palms* will reveal a sharper awareness and psychological sway. Their civil war texts of the 1930s—*The Unvanquished* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*—demonstrate war as a common theme, and that Faulkner had psychologically influenced Hemingway in what might be the latter’s most significant, experimental published novel.

Chapter 3, “Glad to Shoot It Out’: Ranking and Dueling in the 1940s,” examines the decade that saw two direct textual crossings: Faulkner’s “Turn About” appeared in *Men at War* (which Hemingway edited in 1942) and Faulkner cowrote the screenplay for *To Have and Have Not* in 1944. More importantly, letters became a dominant forum for them to sound off about each other. In addition to assessing both writers’ letters to and interactions with Malcolm Cowley, I thoroughly examine Faulkner’s April 1947 ranking of his coevals, the correspondence that Faulkner and Hemingway exchanged afterwards, and Faulkner’s equivocal comments about his ranking in New

York, Japan, and Virginia. Faulkner's ranking sparked the central episode of this vexed relationship, as did his choice not to retract it.

Chapter 4, "Nobel Laureates, Wolves, and Higher-Ranking Writers: Crescendo and Decrescendo in the 1950s and 1960s," delineates the final stage of their tempestuous relationship. Between 1940 and his death in 1961, Hemingway published few books, while Faulkner was much more prolific. This imbalance affected the two authors' interrelations and self-esteem. Faulkner radiated confidence, while Hemingway was increasingly insecure and contemptuous. In addition to discussing their numerous letters of this decade, I will bring a number of texts under review: their Nobel Prize addresses, Faulkner's defense of *Across the River and into the Trees* in *Time*, Hemingway's reactions to it, Hemingway's subtle but spiteful allusion to Faulkner in *Across the River and into the Trees*, Faulkner's laudatory review of *The Old Man and the Sea*, Hemingway's posthumous "The Art of the Short Story," Faulkner's positive invocations of Hemingway in *Requiem for a Nun* and *The Mansion*, Faulkner's comments about Hemingway's suicide, and what seems to be a mock-Faulkner passage written by Hemingway in an unpublished letter.

Chapter 5, "Rivals, Matadors, and Hunters: Textual Sparring and Parallels," offers a more synthetic reading of common themes—both conscious and shared—in Hemingway's *The Dangerous Summer* and the authors' hunting texts: *Go Down, Moses*, *Big Woods*, *Green Hills of Africa*, and the posthumous *The Garden of Eden* and *Under Kilimanjaro*. As the parallels studied in this chapter suggest, Faulkner and Hemingway would be highly influential and mark each other's works, self-constructions, and American letters more broadly. Each man acknowledged the other's stature and influence but directed his energies to making himself look superior in texts and spoken comments, creating a nuanced relationship between two talented, strongly competitive, and proud writers. They competed throughout their careers, but they appreciated one another as artists and sometimes worked with similar material, despite their frequent sniping. Mixed emotions and creative overlap may have been inevitable between two such eminent egos and rivals.



*Note:* When quoting the authors' correspondence, particularly Hemingway's archival letters, I have maintained all errors and idiosyncrasies of spelling (e.g., "haveing," "dis-sect"), style (e.g., contractions without apostrophes), capitalization, grammar, and title formatting. I have used brackets and [*sic*] where appropriate.





## MODERNISM, POSTWAR MANHOOD, AND THE INDIVIDUAL TALENT

### *Maturing in the 1920s*

*Ernie Hemingway, the Oak Park boy with dirty nails whom no one remembered as particularly promising, died and was buried at sea when Hadley and Ernest first crossed to France. The new Ernest Hemingway—courageous war veteran, experimental writer, veteran newsman, skilled sportsman and European traveler—was his own creation, a persona whose early roots would not bear close examination.*

—Michael Reynolds, *Hemingway: The Paris Years*

*Faulkner came to believe his wartime stories. They became part of the legend and folklore he spun around himself, a mythical presence which his later withdrawals and silences helped to consolidate. A limp, a British accent, a High Church background, daring war experiences, the flying of cardboard crates without adequate training—all of these shaped him in his own eyes as well as in others'.*

—Frederick Karl, *William Faulkner: American Writer*

After the Armistice, two young men returned to their respective hometowns after professedly heroic war experiences. Each donned an officer's uniform that had been tailored but not earned through rank; each, though, had a cane and wealth of stories describing his combat heroics. The younger one had been severely injured by mortar and machinegun fire in Italy; he had at least earned his cane. The other—older by two years—had never left Toronto but nonetheless greeted his friends and family with feigned limp, heroic tales of aerial warfare, and a new spelling of their surname. Feeling himself an embryonic artist and true modern man, each also returned to America with a certain restlessness, a desire to see and do more than the

places they had left offered them. Both were part of the “new generation” that F. Scott Fitzgerald would famously introduce in *This Side of Paradise*, one that had “grown up to find all Gods dead, all wars fought, all faiths in man shaken.” These self-professed veteran soldiers and masculine heroes then channeled the generation’s disillusionment and their own imagined war experiences into the symbolic conflict Malcolm Cowley later described in *Exile’s Return*: “All over the Western world, bohemia was carrying on a long warfare with conventional society.”<sup>1</sup> Wanting to break from the social and literary conventions of Victorian America, each crafted a persona that was thoroughly male, partly fictionalized, and nonetheless promisingly artistic.

The postwar world in which Faulkner and Hemingway began writing was manifestly new, and American and European modernism sought to reflect and respond to this vast change. As we know, modernist art utilized fragmentation, collage, montage, and other experimental techniques to mirror what was widely seen as a broken, disrupted postwar world. This era provoked experimentation, both in the arts and the artists’ respective identities during a “new era of high aesthetic self-consciousness.”<sup>2</sup> World War I and its aftermath embedded themselves in the artistic world of the 1920s. The war was the immediate focus of some texts—Ford’s *Parade’s End*, Cather’s *One of Ours*, Faulkner’s *Soldiers’ Pay*, Hemingway’s *A Farewell to Arms*, and many more. In others, the war was an idea (or memory) of disillusioning chaos—among them, Eliot’s *The Waste Land*, Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby*, and some of Faulkner’s and Hemingway’s early stories. The decade of *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*, *Ulysses*, *To the Lighthouse*, *The Well of Loneliness*, and numerous “little magazines” launched many other new, progressive, and bold artistic works. In America and abroad, Pound’s “Make it new” resonated in the writings and authorial self-conceptions of the modernist milieu. Some authors, though, would develop different and competing ways to “Make it new” and eagerly try to be more innovative than their peers.

Commenting on the era’s widespread dedication to newness and artistic self-awareness, Bradbury and McFarlane note that the construction of modernism

turns on the assumption that the registering of modern consciousness and experience was [ . . . ] a profound cultural and aesthetic crux [ . . . ] a problem in the making of structures, the employment of language, the uniting of form, finally in the social meaning of the artist himself. The search for a style and a typology becomes a self-conscious element in the Modernist’s literary

1. Cowley, *Exile’s Return*, 58.

2. Bradbury and McFarlane, “The Name and Nature of Modernism,” 25.

production; he is perpetually engaged in a profound and ceaseless journey through the means and integrity of art.<sup>3</sup>

This “highly aesthetic response,” then, helped define art’s and the artist’s “social meaning”—articulating the roles literature and the author needed to play in reviving postwar life and culture. Modernism, in essence, dictated change, freshness, and creativity in the artist as *artist*. Some artists, “especially the Americans expatriated to Europe—self-consciously responded to what they perceived as a spiritually bankrupt modernity by inventing new poetic and novelistic forms to express, critique, and redeem their age,” observes Margot Norris.<sup>4</sup>

One also sees such self-conscious artistic redemption—or, at least, the desire for it—in Cowley’s *Exile’s Return*. Cowley, a key liaison between Faulkner and Hemingway in the 1940s and 1950s, captures the prevailing mood of modernist urban bohemia, while revealing a level of self-interest in foregrounding his own connection to the era’s key figures. He isolates postwar New York and Paris as loci of the era’s various experiments: the ideas of “self-expression” (“to realize [ . . . ] full individuality through creative work”), “living for the moment” (“to seize the moment as it comes, to dwell in it intensely”), “changing place” and the inability to return America (either at all, or on the same terms as before), and “the religion of art” dominating the era’s aesthetic sensibility.<sup>5</sup> Within this kind of postwar scene, Faulkner and Hemingway began experimenting, innovating, and establishing the “integrity” of art in their poems, stories, and nascent self-constructions. Early on, they complementarily responded to the artistic moment’s problems and opportunities by using language to understand their radically changed world and to contribute to an ever-growing, though fluid, American modernist aesthetic. They started to explore the limits of imagination and style dialectically—with Faulkner tending toward verbosity, stream of consciousness, and scope, Hemingway toward verbal minimalism, Imagistic reality, and sharp focus. It would be a complex dynamic of their mutual opposition, allusion, rivalry, and influence throughout their careers, one based on the personal aesthetics they created in the 1920s.

In addition to new styles, new kinds of texts, and new spiritualities, the modernist epoch also saw “constant interactions and cross-fertilizations” between literature and other arts, and within literature itself.<sup>6</sup> Throughout the era’s rich growth and (un)conscious intertextuality, there were also “tex-

3. Ibid., 2.

4. Norris, 329.

5. Cowley, *Exile’s Return*, 60–61, 144.

6. Crunden, xi.

tual manifestations of mutual influence,” as Dennis Brown has it.<sup>7</sup> Such intertextuality—inflected by respect, rich allusiveness, and sometimes rivalry—was in play around the modernist era by some of its prime movers: Joyce, Pound, Eliot, and Lewis; Jean Toomer and Sherwood Anderson; Matisse and Picasso.<sup>8</sup> Beyond the historical and mythical sources of *The Waste Land*, for instance, Eliot further achieved “the creation of a new poem” through a conscious and unconscious exchange with Pound, Joyce, and Lewis; similarly, Joyce engendered an “allusive resonance” with Lewis and Eliot in *Ulysses*.<sup>9</sup> As there was between the “Men of 1914,” there would be more “intertextual reference” than outright “stylistic influence” between Faulkner and Hemingway as they grew artistically and became competitively aware of each other.<sup>10</sup>

Specifically Pound’s *Cantos*, but more generally other modernist works, “become a palimpsest in which, ideally, one text might overlay another without effacing it,” a form of collage created by allusion, quotation, and desired literary independence. In their intertextual dialectic, Hemingway and Faulkner echoed what Peter Nicholls describes as Pound’s “habit of textual imitation (of pastiche, allusion, citation, and translation)” vis-à-vis Eliot, Joyce, Lewis, and others.<sup>11</sup> Faulkner and Hemingway’s exposure to such modernist intertextuality seemingly showed them ways of interlocking their creativity with their sources—the stories of the Old South and the Falkner family that Faulkner heard (and reshaped) often, or the experiences of Europe and war (some real, others invented) that defined Hemingway’s early life. As they matured from emerging writers into major American voices in the 1930s, they engaged in their own competitive “habit of textual imitation” and collaging of each other’s works, ideas, and masculinized personae, in the hopes of becoming the era’s definitive writer. As I will argue throughout, Faulkner and Hemingway created an extended modernist intertext as they rivaled, criticized, and remained highly aware of each other from the early 1930s until the early 1960s. Prior to defining themselves as artists against each other, however, they had begun the serious work of defining themselves individually as modern male writers after they returned from the war and wanted to be in places more progressive than the South or Midwest.

7. Brown, 1.

8. For a thorough and engaging account of the rivalry and mutual cross-reference between Matisse and Picasso, see Jack Flam’s *Matisse and Picasso: The Story of Their Rivalry and Friendship* (2003) and Yve-Alain Bois’s *Matisse and Picasso* (1999).

9. Brown, 101–2, 89.

10. Brown, 3.

11. Nicholls, 179.



## THE “PROVING GROUND” OF WAR, PARIS, AND NEW ORLEANS

Faulkner's and Hemingway's individual growth in the modernist era entailed forming a multifaceted masculine persona: wounded, decorated veteran; reluctant pupil and eager critic of Sherwood Anderson; and promising, autonomous artist of the avant-garde. Their respective literary experiments ultimately established them individually and against each other psychocompetitively: namely, Hemingway's seeking “one true sentence” and, inversely, Faulkner's “trying to say it all in one sentence, between one Cap and one period,” as he told Cowley in 1944.<sup>12</sup> Faulkner's “novels are the antithesis of simplification,” Robert Penn Warren once observed,<sup>13</sup> whereas Hemingway's signature work embodies a terse directness and crisp, unadorned imagery. Their respective styles—equally but antithetically innovative—began germinating in the postwar era, ultimately into “the reverse” of each other, thanks in part to their time in different cities, to Anderson, and to their distinct visions.<sup>14</sup>

“When he returned home early in 1919, his appearances at the high school produced a sensation, with Hemingway displaying the blood-stained uniform in which he was wounded and relating fanciful tales of the heroic exploits of the Italian Arditi.”<sup>15</sup> Hemingway thus became a local hero whose positive reception spawned more exaggerations and fictions from him. “It was not enough,” writes Michael Reynolds, “to have been a myopic Red Cross ambulance driver blown up while distributing chocolate. Pressured by his peers and local expectations, [he] kept right on inventing his fantasy war, the war he would have fought if only he had been given the chance.”<sup>16</sup> The elements of Hemingway's “fantasy war” included his symbolic self-promotion to First Lieutenant in the Italian military elite and his service at such major battles as the Piave Offensive and Monte Grappa; in reality, “Not a word of it was true” but it certainly made him seem and feel like an experienced, courageous, postwar man.<sup>17</sup> While the wounds in his legs and in his psyche—from the mortar, gunfire, and his rejection by Agnes von Kurowsky—were genuine, his officer status and stories of the Arditi were fabricated.

In Mississippi, Faulkner performed a similar act of masculine self-aggrandizement: he claimed to be an officer and lied about his wartime life, often affecting a limp in the mid-1920s when in Oxford, New Orleans,

12. Cowley, *The Faulkner–Cowley File*, 14.

13. Qtd. in Parini, 153.

14. Nagel, “The Hunting Story in *The Garden of Eden*,” 331.

15. Nagel, *Ernest Hemingway: The Oak Park Legacy*, 11.

16. Reynolds, *The Young Hemingway*, 55.

17. *Ibid.*, 56.

and New York. Having passed himself off to the RAF as a Briton in the late 1910s, Faulkner returned from his air force training in full military regalia and with convincing war fictions, in a way first exercising his creative potential through a self-image rather than a body of writing. Faulkner utilized his budding imagination to enhance his public standing, telling similar stories in diverse ways—that both of his legs had been severely injured, and that he landed a plane after losing the landing gear. Blotner sees in such soldierly affectations an “elaborate charade”: “He enjoyed taking the salute of other soldiers, and he posed for photographs in different combinations from his military wardrobe, a cigarette in his mouth, a handkerchief tucked in his sleeve, and the cane and gloves in his hand.”<sup>18</sup> Somewhat as Hemingway would do a month later, “Lieutenant” Faulkner returned home in December 1918 clad in an officer’s uniform, complete with a lieutenant’s insignia, a cap (minus the cadet’s white stripe), and a cane, even though *Cadet* Faulkner would have been more accurate.

As Blotner posits, this pretense stemmed from a need to feel heroic despite having no combat experience. While posing as a wounded officer in Oxford and elsewhere, Faulkner differentiated his new self from the cadet that he had been. Perhaps being a cadet with no battle experience was insufficiently masculine in the postwar world, as Keith Gandal has recently posited. Like Fitzgerald, Gandal observes, Faulkner and Hemingway “were motivated [ . . . ] by their inability in fact to have these experiences” in combat that were thought to have marked modernist literary manhood, leading to their “intense self-mythification” when returning to America.<sup>19</sup> One sees in both authors (as well as Fitzgerald) “a need to both express and submerge their ‘mobilization wounds’ which were at once inescapable and embarrassing.” Although Gandal primarily analyzes this “need” in *The Sun Also Rises* and *The Sound and the Fury*, we can examine the self-performed, corrective gestures in Hemingway’s and Faulkner’s postwar personae, which elevated them to officer status in “a military that, at the time, essentially had the power to confer or deny masculinity.”<sup>20</sup>

Acting as an injured RAF pilot, Faulkner also began making himself into an “old-fashioned country gentleman and contemporary writer” in the 1920s, a multivalenced self-image that would duel symbolically with Hemingway’s modern, masculinized image.<sup>21</sup> There were, for Singal, “two William Faulkners”: a “Victorian urge toward unity and stability he had inherited as a child of the southern rural gentry, and the modernist drive for multiplicity and change that he absorbed very early in his career as a self-identifying

18. Blotner, *Faulkner*, 66.

19. Gandal, 5, 25.

20. *Ibid.*, 5–6.

21. Singal, 16.

member of the international artistic avant-garde.”<sup>22</sup> Such literary–masculine affect painted Faulkner as a modern Southern man whose abilities, experiences, and rich sense of Southern place and history gave him vast artistic promise. What Susan Donaldson terms Faulkner’s “self-dramatizations” and “stylized acts of masculinity” in the 1920s echoed Hemingway’s similar posturing and gendered sense of self.<sup>23</sup> Although Hemingway’s persona reached an unrivaled level of celebrity, both ostensible war veterans, gifted writers, and modern men shared a “growing necessity of displaying their masculinity—again and again” with other men of their era.<sup>24</sup> Having begun their literary experiments, each also showed some of modernism’s “combination of misogyny and triumphal masculinism” in his work, self-image, and private life, as DeKoven nicely terms it.<sup>25</sup> Some of these “stylized acts” of “triumphal masculinism” entailed a strong professional ego that vied—directly and indirectly—with others of comparable promise and abilities.

Just as Hemingway was hyperconscious of his masculinized image and intertwined it with his writing, Faulkner likewise connected his artistic aspirations to his (supposed) time in the war. For both, despite different experiences, it was a “proving ground” from which they fashioned new, and better, identities.<sup>26</sup> Faulkner and Hemingway thus came into artistic being in the 1920s through a carefully negotiated balance between writing and creating a public persona based more in legend than in fact, despite some elements of truth. In relation to such masculine-military posturing in postwar America,

Fitzgerald, Hemingway, and Faulkner, male novelists old enough or nearly old enough to serve in World War One—and deeply interested in serving (all three in fact imagined being aviators, the elite or stars of the war)—were all frustrated in one way or another in their attempts to join the combat, or what American wartime posters sometimes referred to as the “Big Game,” what was also at the time nicknamed the “Big Show,” and what Fitzgerald called “the big time.”<sup>27</sup>

This notion of the authors being affected by contemporary advertisements of the war’s cultural and gendered significance anticipates the kind of heroic self-advertisements Faulkner and Hemingway performed while grafting their supposed war experiences onto their fiction and early artistic-masculine identities. At this point, they had fused their writing and gestating

22. Ibid., 15.

23. Donaldson, “Introduction: Faulkner and Masculinity,” 3.

24. Ibid., 6.

25. DeKoven, 174.

26. Reynolds, *Young Hemingway*, 11.

27. Gandal, 33.

rivalry with their gendered constructions of postwar life and modern literature. While Hemingway's leg wounds and mental anguish were real and Faulkner's limp and head wound theatrical, their posturing after the war suggests Judith Butler's model of the social enactment of gender. That the "substantive effect of gender is performatively produced" showed them aspiring to models of manhood entailing that men be, among other things, decorated and wounded soldiers who share stories of their imagined heroism, literary promise, and romantic exploits.<sup>28</sup> From their postwar lives through their established careers, their "gender [was] a kind of persistent impersonation that passe[d] as the real."<sup>29</sup> To their minds, a dual link to the Great War—as a decorated soldier or pilot and budding artist coming to terms with the war—would enhance their reputations and credibility. The roles that each author chose and grew into—writer, patriarch, hunter, soldier—bespoke a self-conscious "*corporeal style*, an 'act,' as it were, which [was] both intentional and performative."<sup>30</sup> Although Hemingway's masculine affect was more aggressive and publicized than Faulkner's, both would be equally competitive in engaging intertextually, enacting their masculinized roles, and trying to be *the* author of their milieu.



Hemingway had "continued to create himself anew" after the war, attempting to be a physically active writer who sought the highest aesthetic standards.<sup>31</sup> While reinventing himself, Hemingway moved away from Oak Park: first to Toronto and Chicago, and then Paris. Full of hopes and an emergent artistic energy, Hemingway found Paris a nurturing environment upon his arrival with Hadley in December 1921. He was exposed to creatively energizing books, writers, and ideas that partly comprised the intensive learning experience he underwent in the early 1920s. "[H]is reading changed everything": Turgenev, Dostoyevsky, Stendhal, Flaubert, Joyce, Eliot, and other early, progressive influences with whom he symbolically competed.<sup>32</sup> We can imagine the young Hemingway being awestruck with such new ideas and sophisticated artistic companions, which he would never have encountered in Oak Park. Paris's resident and expatriate artists exchanged ideas, drafts, critiques, and books, often at Sylvia Beach's snug, homelike store, Shakespeare and Company. As the "mother" of Shakespeare and Company, Beach—an Amer-

28. Butler, 24.

29. *Ibid.*, viii.

30. *Ibid.*, 139.

31. Reynolds, *Young Hemingway*, 195.

32. Reynolds, *Hemingway: The Paris Years*, 6.

ican who had lived in Paris since 1916—helped nurture incipient artists and aesthetic ideas in Paris.<sup>33</sup> Having cultivated the “literary center for the cross-fertilization of cultures,” Beach then

provided access to current and experimental literature; made American works available to the French for reading, translation, and criticism; brought artist and public together; and united artists from a dozen countries. She encouraged young writers to write critical essays, influenced their reading, found them printers and translators, rooms, and protectors, received their mail, lent them money, collected money due them, and solicited funds for their support.<sup>34</sup>

Early in the 1920s, Beach had also been instrumental in the revision, publication, and distribution of *Ulysses*, arguably modernism’s principal work and example of its intertextual practices. Paris also epitomized what Marjorie Perloff calls “the *internationalism* of modernism, with its free flow of artistic currents between Moscow and Rome, London and Berlin, Dublin and New York, all roads leading to Paris.”<sup>35</sup> While in a city much more cosmopolitan than Oak Park, Hemingway published *Three Stories and Ten Poems* (August 1923), *in our time* (April 1924), and numerous pieces for the *Toronto Star*, having begun to “write the fiction that would meet the expectations he had created, that would match the persona he had invented for himself.”<sup>36</sup> (He would also somewhat wistfully—though not all that accurately—revisit his Paris days in *Islands in the Stream* and *A Moveable Feast*.) Taking a cue from the Imagist principles of Pound, Williams, and H. D. while establishing himself in Paris, Hemingway crafted his signature minimalist prose, which he had begun approaching while working for the *Kansas City Star*. For him, true modern writing needed a prose of direct, honest clarity, not one of rhetorical, verbose opacity and vast reach.

Another emerging American modernist, however, was approaching the latter back in America. Although the artistic energy and output of Faulkner’s New Orleans would never match that of Hemingway’s Paris, the city served an analogous function for Faulkner. Living in New Orleans from early January to early July 1925, the young Faulkner immersed himself in a cultural center replete with writers (namely Sherwood Anderson), publishing venues, ideas, and alcohol. His “restlessness” exacerbated his “larger sense of entrapment” in Oxford after the war, leading him to a New Orleans that likely felt as far

33. Fitch, 45.

34. Ibid., 16–17.

35. Perloff, 158.

36. Reynolds, *Young Hemingway*, 258.

afield from Oxford as Paris was from Hemingway's Oak Park.<sup>37</sup> For Faulkner, the late 1910s and early 1920s were "a period of explosive self-fashioning" sparked by his switch from *Falkner* to *Faulkner* as early as April 1918.<sup>38</sup> The "colony of writers and artists" he encountered in New Orleans accepted him because of its inherent openness, Faulkner's connection with the Andersons, and "the self-conception he brought with him, that of a bohemian poet" and lothario whose "illegitimate children he had left in and around Oxford and [ . . . ] harrowing war experiences [ . . . ] had made him a poet."<sup>39</sup>

Having published several poems in the *Double Dealer* and then *The Marble Faun* (1924), Faulkner arrived in New Orleans with a promising literary reputation. This was "a period of searching, experimenting, and exploring" what would be the "variety of roles" when moving from *William Falkner* to *William Faulkner*.<sup>40</sup> Beyond his postwar persona, his early writing showed great potential. His pieces in the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* (January–September 1925) "contain his initial attempts to transcribe consciousness by means of interior monologues, to relate the same event through multiple perspectives, and to juxtapose the realistic and symbolic, the prosaic and poetic—all modernist literary techniques that would become staples of his mature fiction," such as *The Sound and the Fury* and *Absalom, Absalom!*.<sup>41</sup> His time in New Orleans enabled him to shift his energies away from poetry that was derivative of Swinburne, Housman, and Keats and toward progressive fiction set in the South and rooted in his personal experiences and modern ideas, thanks largely to Anderson.

When Faulkner followed up his time in New Orleans with a five-month trip to Italy, Switzerland, and France, he went abroad a changed man. He was better attuned to the era's artistic ferment, had begun his first novel in skeletal form (its focus a maimed soldier returning to a much different home), and worked intermittently on what became *Mosquitoes*, eventually his second novel. Likewise inspired by modernism's cosmopolitan tenor, Faulkner felt some of the artistic pull of Paris—its museums, bohemian cafés, and Luxembourg Gardens—and tried to become a modern artist by writing (but never finishing) his *Elmer* manuscript and the early *Mosquito*; in his late novel *The Mansion* (1959), he would send Chick Mallison in search of a similar Paris. He also visited Shakespeare and Company in 1925 but did not involve himself with Paris's expatriate artists as Fitzgerald, Stein, and others did.<sup>42</sup> Upon

37. Minter, 47.

38. Parini, 39; cf., Blotner, *Faulkner*, 61.

39. Minter, 47.

40. Singal, 48, 46.

41. Singal, 59; cf., Karl, 251.

42. Minter, 55.

his return to Mississippi in December 1925, Faulkner's writerly aspirations were growing: *Soldiers' Pay* was accepted by Boni and Liveright in October, and he wrote two volumes addressed to the object of his unrequited love, Helen Baird (*To Helen* and *Mayday*).

Faulkner forged his aesthetic vision and identity as a professional writer in the postwar decade, blending elements of Realism with modernism and even anticipating traits of postmodernism.<sup>43</sup> With *The Sound and the Fury* and subsequent cutting-edge works, he became "interested in formal experimentation and technique" that "provoke[d] disturbances of whatever perspective tries to control his subject matter," hence the challenges of his style, nonlinearity, and splintered narration.<sup>44</sup> After his mid-1920s' apprentice period and the dramatic stylistic shift from *Mosquitoes* to *Sartoris* and then *The Sound and the Fury*, Faulkner's life and fiction explored manifold "form[s] of collaborative storytelling": the choral narration of *As I Lay Dying*, the dialogic narration of *Absalom, Absalom!*, the Southern oral tradition his underpinning style, and his work in Hollywood with other scriptwriters in the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>45</sup> He began mastering a fiction that combined his ideas, histories, and characters with outside sources and stories that he had reshaped. In the process, Faulkner anticipated his ways of dealing with Hemingway's influence and competitive example in his own work. His dialectic with Hemingway in *The Wild Palms*, their Nobel Prize addresses, and numerous other works would be a symbolically "collaborative"—though bitingly competitive—intertextuality, rather than the more direct shots that Hemingway aimed at him. All of this would come later, though.

In tandem with Watson's "collaborative storytelling," Joseph Uργο's sense of Faulkner's aesthetic of reiving—telling, retelling, and recasting his own and others' stories—inflected his way of dealing with Hemingway in their continuum of rivalry and shared psychological influence. That one sees in *The Reivers* "the Faulknerian connection between theft and knowledge, or storytelling" applies to his previous fiction and literary methods.<sup>46</sup> Faulkner had borrowed the term from late-sixteenth century England and Scotland, when an "era of Border reiving was an era of [ . . . ] contested boundaries" in which such reivers would claim, reclaim, and contest land, property, and animals. For Faulkner, "the artist—presumably including himself—[w]as a thief" who openly adapted outside sources in articulating a personal artistic vision, since writing "makes art of what it finds, or reives from experience,

43. Moreland, 18.

44. Ibid., 23.

45. Watson, 147.

46. Uργο, 4.

and reading what others have written is [ . . . ] included among the artist's experiences."<sup>47</sup> As he was establishing himself in the 1920s, Faulkner enhanced his creativity by reshaping others' stories, a creative mode that, for Robert Penn Warren, was rooted in the "Southern tradition of narrative": "remaking what was made, turning a story over in your mind, finding new angles, embellishing, exaggerating, making transformations and substitutions, deepening character and motive."<sup>48</sup> In such texts as *The Wild Palms*, "Race at Morning," and the *To Have and Have Not* screenplay, Faulkner showed that he had read, remade, and transformed some of Hemingway's work while trying to outduel him. True to their origins in an era of literary experimentation and cross-reference, each would ultimately create a modernist collage in "remaking what was made" by one another vis-à-vis his own (superior) vision.

In the late 1910s and early 1920s, each author retold an invented military history in which he was a wounded officer whose combat exploits seemingly elevated his self-conception as a masculine, experienced writer who would challenge convention and indelibly imprint American letters. Their war stories and posturing predicated their rivalry, in the sense that their early concerns with artistic courage, masculinity, and gendered performance underpinned their mutual assessments. In later decades, Faulkner often acted the role of the dignified Southern gentleman who insisted on artistic risk-taking (even if it led to "failure") and competed with Hemingway and their coevals. Hemingway acted the role of the active, masculine writer intent on proving his physical courage by experiencing and writing about war, big-game hunting, bullfighting, and sports, while responding to criticism aggressively. Faulkner and Hemingway may have seen each other doing similar work with themes, imagery, narrative, and characterization—such as when they were published together in the *Double Dealer* in the early 1920s, or when *A Farewell to Arms* and *The Sound and the Fury* were published ten days apart in 1929.

Having spent time in key cities and experimented literarily, Hemingway and Faulkner saw their artistic self-confidence grow after the war. Yet, before they fixed upon their dynamic of competition and one-upmanship, they were at pains to distance themselves from the writer who had had the most direct influence on their early careers. Putting him into contact with modernist ideas and opportunities, Europe also "forced [Faulkner] apart from Sherwood Anderson, as it forced Hemingway: once they had assimilated some of Europe, they could never return to being solely 'American writers,' as

47. Ibid., 7–8.

48. Qtd. in Parini, 244.



Anderson had chosen to do.”<sup>49</sup> A seemingly necessary break from Anderson was in order for both men.

### “WE HAD TO MAKE HIS STYLE LOOK RIDICULOUS”

A crucial part of Faulkner and Hemingway’s rivalry *qua* influence is rooted in their early associations with Sherwood Anderson. Both men were influenced by and indebted to Anderson’s work and persona, yet both distanced themselves as their own artistic stock rose. Anderson became the archetypal Writer, embodying the image and accomplishments of a professional author to which they initially aspired. As the elder statesman, Anderson was the first accomplished writer who mentored Hemingway and Faulkner. In 1953, Faulkner reminisced about Anderson’s impact:

During those New Orleans days and weeks, I gradually became aware that here was a man who would be in seclusion all forenoon—working. Then in the afternoon he would appear and we would walk about the city, talking. Then in the evening we would meet again, with a bottle now, and now he would really talk; the world in miniscule would be there in whatever shadowy courtyard where glass and bottle clinked and the palms hissed like dry sand in whatever moving air. Then tomorrow forenoon and he would be secluded again—working; whereupon I said to myself, “If this is what it takes to be a novelist, then that’s the life for me.”<sup>50</sup>

Faulkner evinces Anderson’s meaning—dedication to craft, conversation with fellow craftsmen, and drinking (leading to “really talk[ing]”). Hemingway’s mentorship with Anderson, the first major writer to critique his work, was a similar model of modern American authorship. Their discussions of writing and the arts in Chicago, unflagging dedication, Paris, and a simple, direct approach defined what Hemingway thought was the early twentieth-century writer’s life.

Born in 1876 in Camden, Ohio, Anderson was already an accomplished writer when he met Hemingway in Chicago in 1920 and Faulkner in New Orleans in 1924. Though Hemingway and Faulkner had writing talents that surpassed Anderson’s, he gave them entrée into the literary communities of Paris and New Orleans, respectively, and arranged for Boni and Liveright to publish their first books. Anderson markedly impacted each man in

49. Karl, 251.

50. Faulkner, “A Note on Sherwood Anderson,” 9–10.

the 1920s, helping him form his artistic individuality and, inadvertently, an anxiety of influence. Anderson's impact was paramount to their development—and to their harsh distancing from him. In response to his shaping the younger authors' style and ideas, Faulkner and Hemingway symbolically revised Anderson by first parodying him and then downplaying his importance. Both likewise echoed what Eliot called in "Tradition and the Individual Talent" writers' "consciousness of the past" in their work, particularly when asserting independence and originality.<sup>51</sup> Another key influence on Hemingway and Faulkner, Eliot also noted, "if we approach a poet without this prejudice we shall often find that not only the best, but the most individual parts of his work may be those in which the dead poets, his ancestors, assert their immortality most vigorously." Although Anderson's "immortality" intoned his pupils' work in their literary "adolescence," his support underpinned their "creative genius," seen in their disavowing his influence and professional importance.<sup>52</sup> The "most individual parts" of their early work and lives indicate Anderson's impact: Faulkner's use of the South and vernacular dialogue; Hemingway's direct style and move to Paris. The authors' early and mature art embodied their senses of self; unlike Eliot's depersonalized poetics, their aesthetics were a continued expression "of personality," not "a continual extinction" of it.<sup>53</sup>

Faulkner saw Anderson as the father of the American modernist generation, despite his dismissive treatment of him. A way for both mentees to veer from their common mentor—a kind of Oedipal killing of the artistic father—was through parody and a superiority complex. Consistent with his competitive temperament, Hemingway was mean-spirited—*The Torrents of Spring* satirizes Anderson's *Dark Laughter* rather trenchantly, and several letters show Hemingway condescendingly rebuffing Anderson's influence. Faulkner took a more understated stance, acknowledging Anderson's artistic abilities, satirizing him in *Mosquitoes* and *Sherwood Anderson and Other Famous Creoles*, and tempering his praise (as he later did when praising Hemingway). Because of Anderson's support, Faulkner and Hemingway wanted to distance themselves from their literary ancestor, acts highly suggestive of their mutual anxiety over Anderson's influence. Their treatment of Anderson—and eventual treatment of each other—ironically echoes what Peter Nicholls has termed the "productive mimesis" of the "intertextuality" between Joyce, Pound, Eliot, and Lewis.<sup>54</sup> In this sense, the young, somewhat haughty Faulkner and Hemingway imitated aspects of Anderson's style, dia-

51. Eliot, 40.

52. Ibid., 38, 37.

53. Ibid., 40.

54. Nicholls, 179.

logue, and authorial persona to produce something new: to borrow from Nicholls, productively mimetic textual parodies declaring their independence. Their satirizing the man who “had assumed the role of father figure to Young America” anticipated their treatment of each other as contemporaries, in that they borrowed from and riffed on each other’s work and image as their intertextuality and figurative sibling rivalry intensified in the 1930s.<sup>55</sup>



Meeting Anderson was one of the most important experiences in Hemingway’s literary youth. Throughout their time in Chicago, they discussed writing, and Anderson evaluated some of Hemingway’s early fiction and encouraged him to revisit the Art Institute of Chicago to absorb some of the era’s groundbreaking ideas. By redirecting Hemingway to Chicago’s cultural world and then, more crucially, setting his sights on Paris, Anderson had begun “Hemingway’s education in the twentieth century.”<sup>56</sup> Anderson furthered this “education” by casting Paris as conducive to new art, showing Hemingway that there “he would see America clearly. There the dross would wash away; there he would find his style. In Paris a craftsman could take pride in his work; he could experiment.”<sup>57</sup> Seeing great promise in Hemingway, Anderson told him that Paris housed the quintessential moderns—Stein, Pound, Joyce, Picasso—and provided letters of introduction to various artists. One letter, written to Lewis Galantière on November 28, 1921, called Hemingway a “very delightful man” and “a young fellow of extraordinary talent” who “will get somewhere.”<sup>58</sup> Anderson also told Stein on December 3, 1921, that “Mr. Hemingway is an American writer instinctively in touch with everything worth-while going on here, and I know you will find Mr. and Mrs. Hemingway delightful people to know.”<sup>59</sup> A few years later, however, Hemingway ceased to be “delightful” for Anderson and Stein.

Going to Paris was one of the most important decisions that the young Hemingway made. Living in Chicago in 1919–1921 after returning from the war, he had aspirations to be a successful writer and worldly man, which he could not realize in an Oak Park that was becoming increasingly limited in possibilities and incompatible with his progressive ideas, morality, and sensibility. Traveling to Paris—and later to Italy, Spain, and Austria—enabled Hemingway to realize his literary potential, to move in cutting-edge circles,

55. Crunden, 25.

56. Reynolds, *Young Hemingway*, 258.

57. *Ibid.*, 253.

58. Anderson, *Sherwood Anderson: Letters*, 82.

59. *Ibid.*, 85.

and to absorb what must have seemed an attainable artistic energy. After their arrival in Paris in December 1921, Ernest and Hadley began encountering “a new world” over the next few years—cafés, Parisian night life, and such modernist-era figures as Fitzgerald, Stein, Joyce, Pound, and the Murphys.<sup>60</sup>

Had he stayed in Oak Park, Hemingway would likely never have received invaluable counsel on his writing from Pound and Stein, nor would he have had the types of experiences he later wove into his fiction—the Festival of San Fermín in Pamplona; the Greco-Turkish War; and his encounters with artists in a cosmopolitan environment conducive to writing, experimentation, fluctuating gender roles, and the refinement of his craft and signature style. His years in Paris and elsewhere in Europe led to a wealth of avant-garde material: *in our time*, *In Our Time*, *The Sun Also Rises*, *Men Without Women*, and *A Farewell to Arms*. Likewise, he forged connections with established artists who helped him get published but whom he rebuked as he became increasingly competitive and independent-minded. Without Anderson’s support, perhaps Paris would have come across as alien or even unfriendly (and not as a key locus of modern art), or Hemingway would instead have followed his original itinerary to Italy, or Stein may not have steered him toward the “one true sentence” that he sought for much of his early writing life. Would that Hemingway had acknowledged this support.

Anderson introduced Hemingway to some of modernism’s avatars, and Boni and Liveright published *In Our Time* in 1925 after giving him a three-book contract. Nevertheless, Hemingway’s primary reaction to Anderson’s efforts on his behalf was separation, first in *The Torrents of Spring*. As Reynolds, Robert Trogdon, Scott Donaldson, and others have noted, his intent for this scathing parody was twofold: to distance himself from Anderson and break his contract with Boni and Liveright so he could join Fitzgerald and Max Perkins at Scribners. Since Anderson was one of Boni and Liveright’s prominent writers and its “then-current list leader,” an unabashedly critical novel would, as Hemingway correctly saw, be turned down, leaving him free to go to Scribners given the terms of his contract.<sup>61</sup> Satirizing what he saw as Anderson’s awkward wordiness, simplistic vernacular, and overwrought emotional portraiture, Hemingway laced his Midwestern story with Anderson’s supposedly weaker traits. His exposure of Anderson’s apparent shortcomings manifests a kind of zero-sum gesture: what Hemingway thought weakened Anderson’s ethos simultaneously strengthened his own.

Anderson meant for *Dark Laughter*, his fifth novel, to be a serious exploration of life in the Midwest, more specifically of the African American community’s complex emotions and thoughts. (Their “dark laughter” gives the

60. Reynolds, *Hemingway: The Paris Years*, 15.

61. Trogdon, 22.

novel its title.) Wanting to be his own writer and disliking *Dark Laughter*, Hemingway dashed off his parody in less than two weeks.<sup>62</sup> “No doubt Hemingway [ . . . ] wanted to cut ties with one of his former mentors [ . . . ] who had recently signed with Liveright as well and whose work many critics saw as the major influence on Hemingway”; relatedly, Hemingway was displeased with Boni and Liveright’s tepid “marketing of *In Our Time*,” a complaint he would often levy at Scribners.<sup>63</sup> What Anderson treated seriously, Hemingway treated humorously: for instance, racial differences and characters’ inarticulate thoughts. Both a misreading of and separation from *Dark Laughter*, *The Torrents of Spring* misrepresents Anderson’s themes as satirical fodder and marks Hemingway’s self-ascribed superiority.

One parallel between *The Torrents of Spring* and *Dark Laughter* is the use of a recurrent background sound. Anderson depicts blacks’ “dark laughter” as something that separates them from white society: namely, a source of meaning and a product of a superior culture. Hemingway adapts this leit-motif. Rather than laughter, his refrain is wind that sounds like an “Indian war-whoop,” and he twice echoes Anderson’s title: a black bartender laughs the “dark laughter of the Negro” and two characters hear “the haunting sound of a Negro laughing.”<sup>64</sup> While this figuratively quoted laughter is the same trope as Anderson’s, it lacks the intended seriousness and cultural resonance. Anderson saw African Americans as a crucial part of American society; their laughter symbolized a rich, intriguing cultural presence. Hemingway’s “war-whoop” may suggest racial difference, but it is comically out of place: Hemingway casts it satirically, and Anderson did not associate the aural motif with Native Americans. Though both recurring sounds refer to a sense of otherness, a “war-whoop” riffs on the symbolism of “dark laughter.”

Each text’s opening paragraph introduces its two main characters: Anderson’s Bruce Dudley and Sponge Martin, Hemingway’s Yogi Johnson and Scripps O’Neil. In each, we see someone standing near a factory window musing on the coming of spring. As Anderson writes,

Bruce Dudley stood near a window that was covered with flecks of paint and through which could be faintly seen, first a pile of empty boxes, then a more or less littered factory yard running down to a steep bluff, and beyond the brown waters of the Ohio River. Time very soon now to push the windows up. Spring would be coming soon now. Near Bruce at the next window, stood Sponge Martin, a thin wiry little old man with a heavy black mustache.<sup>65</sup>

62. Reynolds, *Hemingway: The Paris Years*, 334.

63. Trogon, 19.

64. Hemingway, *The Torrents of Spring*, 64, 67.

65. Anderson, *Dark Laughter*, 9.

Hemingway redirects this opening in his own first paragraph:

Yogi Johnson stood looking out of the window of a big pump-factory in Michigan. Spring would soon be here. Could it be that what this writing fellow Hutchinson had said, “If winter comes can spring be far behind?” would be true again this year? Yogi Johnson wondered. Near Yogi at the next window but one stood Scripps O’Neil, a tall, lean man with a tall, lean face. Both stood and looked out at the empty yard of the pump-factory. Snow covered the crated pumps that would soon be shipped away.<sup>66</sup>

The resemblance between these two openings would not have been lost on readers who had just read *Dark Laughter* a few months earlier. Hemingway also satirized Anderson’s repetition of “stood” and “pump” (three times each in both passages) and “tall, lean” (twice in one sentence) and attempts at interiority. At the time, Hemingway was trying to pare down his writing and use minimalism advantageously; instead, this passage’s slight awkwardness is most typical of his purposeful caricature of Andersonian subjects and style.

Equally awkward and repetitive passages recur in *The Torrents of Spring*, as Hemingway again targets Anderson’s style. One example comes from the beginning of Chapter 7:

Now the day’s work was over. It was finished. Scripps on his way to the beanery. Scripps happy that he was working with his hands. Scripps thinking of the old pump-makers. Scripps going to the society of a friendly waitress. Who was that waitress, anyway? What was it had happened to her in Paris? He must find out more about Paris. Yogi Johnson had been there. He would quiz Yogi. Get him to talk. Draw him out. Make him tell what he knew. He knew a trick or two about that.

Who was Yogi, anyway? Had he really been in the war? What had the war meant to him? Was he really the first man to enlist from Cadillac? Where was Cadillac, anyway? Time would tell.<sup>67</sup>

Hemingway seems to have aimed at Chapter 4, when Anderson describes Bruce’s thinking:

Words flitting across the mind of Bruce Dudley, varnishing wheels in the factory of the Grey Wheel Company of Old Harbor, Indiana. Thoughts flitting across his mind. Drifting images. He had begun to get a little skill with

66. Hemingway, *The Torrents of Spring*, 3.

67. *Ibid.*, 32–33.

his fingers. Could one in time get a little skill with his thoughts, too? Could thoughts and images be laid bare on paper some day as Sponge Martin laid on varnish, never too thick, never too thin, never lumpy?<sup>68</sup>

Both passages' sentence fragments paint Bruce and Scripps as insecure characters whose minds are filled with more questions than answers. In Hemingway's castigatory passage, we see repetition similar to that in the opening paragraph, with "Scripps" beginning four consecutive sentences and "anyway" concluding three questions. As with many of Anderson's characters from *Dark Laughter* and *Winesburg, Ohio*, Scripps is mildly inarticulate, even rambling in his thoughts. The reference to Paris in *The Torrents of Spring* is ironic: the city to which Anderson steered Hemingway spawned the latter's artistic growth, sense of autonomy, and means of veering away from most early mentors.

*The Torrents of Spring* expresses Hemingway's "parricidal mood" vis-à-vis Anderson, who seemed past his prime and thus a fitting target for parody.<sup>69</sup> Hemingway thought he was the younger, better writer who announced his superiority and Anderson's inferiority, which Crunden sees as "an effort to step up in class as well as deny influence to a predecessor."<sup>70</sup> He claimed that *The Torrents of Spring* was a joke, but its acidity had insulted Anderson. This early Hemingway text, though inferior aesthetically to *In Our Time* or *The Sun Also Rises*, anticipates his staunch competitive temperament and practice of disparaging his rivals in print. He wanted to be seen as a self-directed artist, not an Andersonian disciple. The most effective way for him to do this, and at the same time move to Scribners, was to write a book critical of his primary influence and their marquee author. Hemingway would follow this pattern throughout his career, as Donald Ogden Stewart recalled in 1972; he could not abide feeling influenced by or inferior to another writer and did not "want to be overdrawn at your bank," as Stewart remembers it.<sup>71</sup>

Before *The Torrents of Spring*, Hemingway tried to paint himself as associated with but not influenced by Anderson. He wrote to Edmund Wilson, who had just reviewed *Three Stories and Ten Poems*, on November 25, 1923, to (re)claim "My Old Man":

No I don't think *My Old Man* derives from Anderson. It is about a boy and his father and race-horses. Sherwood has written about boys and horses. But very differently. It derives from boys and horses. Anderson derives from

68. Anderson, *Dark Laughter*, 31.

69. Crunden, 308.

70. Ibid., 310.

71. Qtd. in Bruccoli, *The Fitzgerald/Hemingway Annual*, 85.

boys and horses. I don't think they're anything alike. I know I wasn't inspired by him.

I know him pretty well but have not seen him for several years. His work seems to have gone to hell, perhaps from people in New York telling him too much how good he was. Functions of criticism. I am very fond of him. He has written good stories.<sup>72</sup>

This letter prefigures what Hemingway would say later in the 1920s: that he knew Anderson and respected his work, that his talent had declined, and that younger writers (read Hemingway) had bypassed him. Anderson's "good stories" and his own self-proclaimed fondness for him to the contrary, Hemingway distanced himself from writing that had "gone to hell." While this sentiment is expressed in two paragraphs of a letter, rather than a book, Hemingway still sees himself as a better writer with the experience and perspective to note Anderson's waning career.

On May 21, 1926, Hemingway wrote Anderson to explain the text as a satire, implying that a changing of the guard had taken place, with his own potential dominant. For Hemingway, the book "isn't meant to be mean, but it is absolutely sincere," in that his criticisms of *Dark Laughter* are genuine, even accurate:

[I]f among ourselves we have to pull our punches, if when a man like yourself who can write very great things writes something that seems to me, (who have never written anything great but am anyway a fellow craftsman) rotten, I ought to tell you so. Because if we have to pull our punches and if when somebody starts to slop they just go on slopping from then on with nothing but encouragement from their contemporaries—why we'll never produce anything but Great American Writers i.e. apprenticeship allowance claimed. [...]

1. Because you are my friend I would not want to hurt you. 2. Because you are my friend has nothing to do with writing. 3. Because you are my friend I hurt you more. 4. Outside of personal feelings nothing that's any good can be hurt by satire.<sup>73</sup>

To Hemingway's mind, he as the superior artist had to levy such criticisms against a washed-up writer. Assuming the voice of experience, he does not want to give Anderson unwarranted support for writing sub-par work. Although he had earlier expressed gratitude to Anderson, this letter, written

72. Hemingway, *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters*, 105.

73. *Ibid.*, 205–6.



only five years after their first meeting, expresses much the opposite. Had Anderson not been such a strong force in Hemingway's early life, though, Hemingway would not have felt the need to distance himself from his fore-runner so piercingly.

Anderson was bothered by implications of this letter and *The Torrents of Spring*, responding with his own mild satire of Hemingway and his image. In his posthumous *Memoirs*, Anderson intimates that Hemingway was overcome by competitiveness, superiority, and a reluctance to feel indebted to his mentors, evidenced by the above letter "from Hemy":

This after he had written and published a book called *The Torrents of Spring*, and I thought it the most completely patronizing letter I had ever received.

In the letter he spoke of what had happened as something fatal to me. He had, he said, written the book on an impulse, having only six weeks to do it. It was intended to bring to an end, once and for all, the notion that there was any worth in my own work.

There was something in the letter that was gigantic. It was a kind of funeral oration delivered over my grave. It was so raw, so pretentious, so patronizing, that it was amusing but I was filled with wonder. [ . . . ] In the letter he had used a prize fighting term, speaking of the knockout blow he had given me, and in my answer I think I did say that I had always thought of myself as a pretty good middle weight and that I doubted his ever being able to make the heavy weight class.<sup>74</sup>

Anderson's deserved bitterness toward Hemingway is evident here, as it is later in his *Memoirs* when he brings up the Hemingway image vis-à-vis modern masculinity:

Men lose all touch with the sources of masculine life. There are less good workmen and less real males. I think that one of the best evidences of this is, for example, the worship of obvious power. It is one reason why a fine prose man, like Ernest Hemingway, is so obsessed with killing, with bullfights, etc. This masculinity that must be constantly asserted in this way is always a fake masculinity. All real masculinity and all of the real power that can come out of a true masculinity should be expressed in gentleness. You do not constantly assert what you are sure you have.<sup>75</sup>

Anderson seems to feel that Hemingway's overwrought persona distracts

74. Anderson, *Sherwood Anderson's Memoirs*, 463–64.

75. *Ibid.*, 551.

from his writing ability, a suggestion of gender insecurity that anticipates Hemingway's future attitudes toward Faulkner and others. Remembering the broadsides of *The Torrents of Spring* and subsequent letters, Anderson realized that Hemingway had created a behavior pattern: using an older support-figure to further his career, breaking harshly from him or her, and denying influence. It happened, to varying degrees, with Fitzgerald, Stein, Gerald Murphy, and others. Anderson was only an exception in that Hemingway wrote a book to expressly sever their ties.

Despite Hemingway's denial of his influence, Anderson was a liaison between his writing and the expatriate community that would help him refine this talent and become *Hemingway*. In fact, Anderson was so influential that he needed more than a brief allusion (in one story or letter, perhaps) to enact the break that he felt he needed. His using several texts to disassociate himself from Anderson prefigures his treatment of Faulkner: each wielded such psychocompetitive influence that they routinely referred to and criticized one another in numerous forums. Anderson became an early target for Hemingway's ways of distancing himself from those he saw as inferior, threatening, or potentially superior. Enter Faulkner.



The animosity between Anderson and Hemingway was not as pronounced in the dynamic between Anderson and Faulkner, although Faulkner experienced a noticeable influence-anxiety. While Hemingway did not eagerly acknowledge Anderson's influence, Faulkner publicly declared his sense of indebtedness early, dedicating *Sartoris*: "To Sherwood Anderson through whose kindness I was first published, with the belief that this book will give him no reason to regret that fact." The Anderson-Faulkner dynamic was initially characterized by amiable exchange and respect, but Faulkner's satire ultimately weakened their friendship.

Anderson was "the most important figure in Faulkner's still very young career."<sup>76</sup> Faulkner had known Anderson's future wife Elizabeth Prall when he worked in her bookstore during his brief time in New York in 1921; he did not meet Anderson until his first visit to New Orleans in October 1924. Faulkner's New Orleans echoed Hemingway's Paris—each was an urban center where the arts flourished and where writers, painters, and musicians formed a community which was, unlike their homes, conducive to the bohemian lifestyle and crucial to their artistic maturation. Faulkner published in both the progressive *Double Dealer* and the New Orleans *Times-Picayune*,

76. Karl, 194.

but more importantly Anderson helped him get published and ushered him through the New Orleans artistic community. Though he had published *The Marble Faun* by the time he arrived, Faulkner started to become an artist in New Orleans. Thereafter, he eschewed poetry for prose fiction (first as newspaper sketches, then as novels), due in part to Anderson's support and advice. Much as Paris exposed Hemingway to new ideas, New Orleans was a fitting place for Faulkner to mature personally and artistically:

He was now subject, even more than in Canada three years before, to the kind of experience that had helped shape the artists of the Southern Literary Renaissance. He found himself removed from the familiar environment and set down amid an alien culture. In this new world he could also absorb unfamiliar attitudes and discern different currents, which could help him to reassess what was best about his own world [. . .].<sup>77</sup>

"Different," "alien," "unfamiliar"—all suitably describe what Faulkner found in New Orleans and more broadly during the literary avant-gardism of the late 1910s and 1920s. His move to fiction, invention of war experiences, and fashioning of his public image evince how the change from *Falkner* to *Faulkner* was more than a respelling of his surname.

Faulkner felt Anderson's influence sharply during and after his stay in New Orleans. His attempts at mild satire notwithstanding, he eventually acknowledged a professional and artistic debt to his mentor, if a little patronizingly. Anderson was invaluable to the early Faulkner: he critiqued his apprentice work and style, encouraged him to write about the South, and informally collaborated with him on a series of tall tales in conversations and letters—which Faulkner later worked into *Mosquitoes*—about Andrew Jackson's Louisianan descendants. Anderson's support allowed Faulkner to advance his burgeoning artistic life from a minor poet to fictionist, pushing along Faulkner's "process of growth and hard-won independence."<sup>78</sup> As he did with Hemingway, Anderson steered Faulkner to Boni and Liveright, which published *Soldiers' Pay* and *Mosquitoes* before rejecting *Flags in the Dust* (the early, uncut version of *Sartoris*). Anderson was vastly supportive of Faulkner, and his efforts were met, at least initially, with gratitude and respect.

Although their relations largely disintegrated by the late 1920s, Anderson remained an influential force in Faulkner's development as a Southern modernist. However, perhaps feeling as Hemingway did about Anderson—

77. Blotner, *Faulkner*, 107.

78. *Ibid.*, 147.

that his best work was behind him and that a changing of the guard was in order—Faulkner wrote two satirical portraits. Faulkner's were not as scathing as Hemingway's, but they drove a wedge between mentor and mentee nevertheless. First, he collaborated with the New Orleans artist William Spratling on *Sherwood Anderson and Other Famous Creoles* in 1926. The Foreword opens with intentional echoes of Anderson's conversational idiom: "First, let me tell you something about our Quarter, the Vieux Carre. Do you know our quarter, with its narrow streets, its old wrought-iron balconies and its southern European atmosphere? An atmosphere of richness and soft laughter, you know."<sup>79</sup> Faulkner plays with the repetitions of Anderson's prose and his narrators' and characters' vernacular. He continues satirizing his mentor in a passage strongly reminiscent of *Winesburg, Ohio*:

When this young man, Spratling, came to see me, I did not remember him. Perhaps I had passed him in the street. Perhaps he had been one of the painters at whose easel I had paused, to examine. Perhaps he knew me. Perhaps he had recognized me when I paused, perhaps he had been aware of the fellowship between us and had said to himself, "I will talk to him about what I wish to do; I will talk my thought out to him. He will understand, for there is a fellowship between us."<sup>80</sup>

Faulkner again riffs on Anderson's stylistic repetition. Spratling appears to be one of Winesburg's "grotesques"; in Faulkner's portrait, his language is simple and somewhat fumbling, and he has an unspoken desire that he wishes to express. The speaker senses a connection between himself and Spratling; though the speaker is meant to be a mock-Faulkner, he could just as easily be George Willard seeking out one of Winesburg's inarticulate citizens. Embodying influence-anxiety, Faulkner adapts Anderson's style and characterization, detaches himself from his mentor, and asserts the latter's aesthetic weakness, though much less vituperatively than Hemingway had done.

Faulkner ends this short piece with a self-reflexive observation: "We have one priceless universal trait, we Americans. That trait is our humor. What a pity it is that it is not more prevalent in our art. [ . . . ] And perhaps seeing ourselves in the eyes of our fellow artists, will enable those who have strayed to establish anew a sound contact with the fountainhead of our American life."<sup>81</sup> Faulkner seems to couch a message to Anderson here: this Foreword should be taken in jest, and he has "strayed" and needs humor (and to be humorized) to regain his stature. In spirit, this echoes Hemingway's pic-

79. Faulkner, "Foreword to *Sherwood Anderson and Other Famous Creoles*," 173.

80. *Ibid.*, 174.

81. *Ibid.*, 174–75.

ture of Anderson, in his May 1926 letter, as a writer with declining powers. Another figure trying to negotiate Anderson's impact, Faulkner adopts a similarly advanced stance as he enacts the role of an accomplished artist capable of noting his mentor's downturn. As Faulkner's logic goes, "seeing ourselves in the eyes of our fellow artists" can assist in reining in older artists such as Anderson, whose style and falling off open them up to the critique of younger writers.

Anderson was also the source of Dawson Fairchild in *Mosquitoes*, a roman-à-clef based on New Orleans's artistic community.<sup>82</sup> On a yachting excursion attended by several artists, the characters discuss art, drink, and form alliances while stranded due to mechanical problems. Fairchild, the group's established artist, is one of many partygoers who, much like Faulkner himself in the Vieux Carré, divided his time between drinking and talking about art. Faulkner's use of Anderson in an early novel differs from Hemingway's in that Anderson is not the sole satirical target. Numerous New Orleans artists are parodied; Faulkner even makes a glancing reference to himself in a conversation between two women: "Faulkner? [ . . . ] Never heard of him."<sup>83</sup> Fairchild, though, is not entirely negative, his a portrait comprising mockery and admiration. Fairchild is a recognized artist who commands attention and respect, and characters often seek his opinions on the arts or New Orleans life. Although Faulkner treats his Anderson-figure as a mentor and important artist, at novel's end we see a drunken Fairchild vomiting with several other men at a brothel, the last scene of several featuring an inebriated Fairchild. Such a closing portrait hardly agrees with the earlier picture of the respected artist figure.

*Mosquitoes* couples criticism and praise of Fairchild, and what is said about Fairchild likely extends, at some level, to Faulkner's opinion of Anderson. Perhaps the most direct jibe at surfaces in a discussion between Julius Kauffman and Eva Wiseman. For Julius, Fairchild is "a man of undoubted talent, despite his fumbling bewilderment in the presence of sophisticated emotions." Eva seconds this statement, following up with her own guarded praise:

82. Cleanth Brooks's *William Faulkner: Toward Yoknapatawpha and Beyond* lists the real-life counterparts for Faulkner's characters, among them Anderson, Julius Weis Friend (editor of the *Double Dealer*), and William Spratling (Faulkner's friend and companion on his European trip) (378–80). As Brooks notes, Julius's and Eva's criticisms echo Faulkner's April 1925 piece in the *Dallas Morning News*. Faulkner praises *Winesburg, Ohio* and *Horses and Men* but adopts a patronizing tone; he identifies the same limits in Anderson as Julius and Eva do in Fairchild, namely, a lack of humor in *Many Marriages*, *Windy McPherson's Son*, and *A Story Teller's Story*. Faulkner posits that humor is sometimes lacking in Anderson's fiction, perhaps in the same way that Fairchild's "innate humorless belief" sometimes confuses him.

83. Faulkner, *Mosquitoes*, 145.

"[H]aving been born an American of a provincial midwestern lower middle class family, he has inherited all the lower middle class's awe of Education with a capital E, an awe which the very fact of his difficulty in getting to college and staying there, has increased."

[Julius responds,] "His writing seems fumbling, not because life is unclear to him, but because of his innate humorless belief that, though it bewilders him at times, life at bottom is sound and admirable and fine."

[ . . . ]

[Julius continues,] "But he lacks what they [Emerson and Lowell] had at command among their shelves of discrete books and their dearth of heat and vulgarity—a standard of literature that is international. No, not a standard exactly: a belief, a conviction that his talent need not be restricted to delineating things which his conscious mind assures him are American reactions."<sup>84</sup>

Though this conversation is explicitly about Fairchild, Cleanth Brooks notes the implicit correlation between the consensus view of Fairchild and Faulkner's assessments of Anderson, whose "innate humorous belief" seemingly needed the kind of jesting that Faulkner's earlier Foreword advocated. With a background closely matching Anderson's, Fairchild seems too provincial and insufficiently urbane, almost a great artist by accident whose "fumbling" prevents him from expressing his genius fully. Julius and Eva think Fairchild "restricted" in his sole focus on the American scene and his reluctance to explore more universal themes, showing in part Faulkner taking his own work in what he deemed new and better directions.

Faulkner, though not as cruel as Hemingway, angered Anderson through *Mosquitoes* and the mocking Foreword to *Sherwood Anderson and Other Famous Creoles*. He would later clarify his stance on Anderson in a 1953 essay—justifying his parodies by saying that he meant to critique the style, not the man—but the damage had been done.<sup>85</sup> Despite parodying Anderson, Faulkner expressed some regard in "Sherwood Anderson" (*Dallas Morning News*, April 1925) and "A Note on Sherwood Anderson" (*Atlantic Monthly*, June 1953). These essays, unlike Hemingway's letters, admit Anderson's influence and fondly recall his valuable guidance, but with a note of mild critique. Both pieces, read in unison, offer us a comprehensive picture of

84. *Ibid.*, 241–43.

85. Faulkner would similarly explain his controversial fourth-place ranking of Hemingway in April 1947 by saying that his target was Hemingway's lack of artistic courage, not Hemingway himself. Faulkner seemed to feel superior to both his former mentor and then-rival, hence his clarifying but not retracting his criticisms.

Faulkner and his regard for Anderson: his earlier praise and criticism, his later praise and respect.

The 1925 essay reflects the younger Faulkner's stance that Anderson is good but limited—in later decades, Faulkner and Hemingway would also imply a *but* when assessing each other. Faulkner lauds *Horses and Men* and *Winesburg, Ohio*, noting that the latter's characters "live and breathe. They are beautiful." He disagrees with the notion that Anderson imitated Emile Zola or the Russian novelists.<sup>86</sup> Faulkner also praises Anderson for his connection to the land and to America:

Men grow from the soil, like corn and trees: I prefer to think of Mr. Anderson as a lusty corn field in his native Ohio. As he tells in his own story, his father not only seeded him physically, but planted also in him the belief, necessary to a writer, that his own emotions are important, and also planted in him the desire to tell them to someone.<sup>87</sup>

Likewise, "[h]e is American, and more than that, a middle westerner, of the soil: he is as typical of Ohio in his way as Harding was in his. A field of corn with a story to tell and a tongue to tell it with."<sup>88</sup> That Faulkner praised Anderson for being connected to the land is particularly resonant, since Anderson encouraged Faulkner to write about the South, to root his art there. The definitively Southern pupil absorbed one of the teacher's most important artistic lessons about regionalism and landscape in creating, peopling, and historicizing Yoknapatawpha County. Nonetheless, Faulkner disparages *Many Marriages* and *Marching Men*, notes Anderson's lack of humor generally and in *Windy McPherson's Son* specifically, and proclaims that he has not fully matured. This last criticism especially stands out, as Anderson had at least seven books in print by 1925 to Faulkner's one (not counting privately printed volumes of poetry). Faulkner, like Hemingway, plays the modernist critic who points out his predecessors' shortcomings; "he has not matured yet" sounds odd coming from the mouth of a younger, less accomplished writer, yet Faulkner makes this assertion to develop his professional, self-confident ethos further.<sup>89</sup>

Faulkner's *Atlantic Monthly* piece, "A Note on Sherwood Anderson," adopts a different tone from the piece published nearly thirty years earlier, almost exclusively paying tribute to Anderson and his influence to a broad readership. We learn of the importance of New Orleans and the exchange

86. Faulkner, *New Orleans Sketches*, 133.

87. *Ibid.*, 132–33.

88. *Ibid.*, 139.

89. *Ibid.*, 138.

of ideas they began there. Faulkner imagines a literary genealogy to whom he felt himself—and, after 1953, Hemingway—an heir apparent: “His was not the power and rush of Melville, who was his grandfather, nor the lusty humor for living of Twain, who was his father; he had nothing of the heavy-handed disregard for nuances of his older brother, Dreiser.”<sup>90</sup> This more mature Faulkner represents Anderson as the older, wiser writer dispensing advice as “[he] talked and I listened.” Anderson underscored the importance of place, as Faulkner recalls:

“You have to have somewhere to start from: then you begin to learn,” he told me. “It dont matter where it was, just so you remember it and aint ashamed of it. Because one place to start from is just as important as any other. You’re a country boy; all you know is that little patch up there in Mississippi where you started from. But that’s all right too. It’s America too [ . . . ].”<sup>91</sup>

While Faulkner created Yoknapatawpha’s families, tensions, stories, and history, Anderson initially directed his focus homeward and pushed him toward addressing universal themes in a localized setting. Readers of Faulkner in 1953 would have known the importance of place in his fiction; that he acknowledges Anderson’s role in this important regard shows a level of posthumous generosity in the older, then-established Faulkner.

Faulkner discusses his and Hemingway’s satires, stating that his Foreword chided not Anderson himself but his “primer-like style,” distinguishing the *man* from the *author*:

Neither of us, Hemingway or I, could have touched, ridiculed, his work itself. But we had to make his style look ridiculous; and [ . . . ] after *Dark Laughter*, when he had reached the point where he should have stopped writing, he had to defend that style at all costs because he too must have known by then in his heart that there was nothing else left.<sup>92</sup>

Having parodied the writing yet elevated the writer, Faulkner looks back on “the unhappy caricature affair” as a low point in Anderson’s otherwise successful career.<sup>93</sup> That Faulkner mentions Hemingway here indicates his sense of them as young, independent writers in the 1920s who distanced themselves from their common mentor, only to take aim at each other. Though not in communication or competition at the time of their Anderson

90. Faulkner, “A Note on Sherwood Anderson,” 5.

91. *Ibid.*, 3, 8.

92. *Ibid.*, 6.

93. *Ibid.*, 10.



parodies, Faulkner and Hemingway had shared critical treatments of their common mentor that would soon backdrop their own tense, competitive, and mutually influential dynamic.

Faulkner ends by recalling his last meeting with Anderson in New York, “when he appeared taller, bigger than anything he ever wrote,” a man who was “a giant in an earth populated to a great—too great—extent by pygmies,” with *Winesburg, Ohio* and *The Triumph of the Egg* as his “gestures commensurate with girthhood.”<sup>94</sup> Twelve years after Anderson’s death, Faulkner tried to make amends by admitting his influence and artistic worth as a “giant” who, though parodied, was a fountainhead of literary knowledge. Because Faulkner was never as mean-spirited as Hemingway, Anderson was much more supportive of him. After *Soldiers’ Pay*, Anderson spoke optimistically of Faulkner to Horace Liveright, despite Faulkner’s parodies. Judging by the novel, Anderson sees Faulkner as a “good prospect”: “He is modern enough but not too modern; also he is smart. If I were you I would do what I could to encourage him to keep at work. [ . . . ] He may be a little bit like a thoroughbred colt who needs a race or two before he can do his best.”<sup>95</sup> Here, Anderson sees undisciplined talent in Faulkner, merging his assessment of the writer with his knowledge of horseracing. This evaluation would eventually turn out to be accurate, as Faulkner was never regarded as truly promising until after *The Sound and the Fury*, his fourth published novel. While telling Liveright that “I do not like the man personally very much,” Anderson expresses confidence in Faulkner’s abilities and potential.<sup>96</sup>

Anderson remembered Faulkner much more positively than he did Hemingway in his *Memoirs*: “[T]here was never any doubt in my mind about Faulkner. He was, from the first, a real writer. He had the touch and there was always in him something finer and certainly more generous than, for example, in Hemingway.”<sup>97</sup> Just as Anderson was sensitive to Hemingway’s harsh criticism, he recognized that Faulkner was “more generous” in admitting an influence and appreciation. Yet: “Not that my going to bat for either of the two men, mentioned here, was personal. They were both men of ability. I went to bat for that ability.”<sup>98</sup> As Faulkner had done, Anderson distinguishes Hemingway and Faulkner as *men* and *authors*; he came to like their writing more than the men themselves, it seems. Having been supportive, Anderson experienced “considerable drama” after he

94. Ibid.

95. Anderson, *Sherwood Anderson: Letters*, 155.

96. Ibid.

97. Anderson, *Sherwood Anderson’s Memoirs*, 462.

98. Ibid., 466.

met and helped the two foremost fiction writers of the period [ . . . ] and was repaid by a savage attack by Hemingway and a milder one by Faulkner. Something about the older writer made him vulnerable to ridicule, and yet it was his qualities of openness, generosity, and willingness to help that attracted younger writers to him.<sup>99</sup>

Anderson, as object of “savage attack” and “ridicule,” was one of the first writers to be targeted by competitive egos that strove for artistic independence and utmost success at others’ expense.

Having enacted such a “drama” of influence-anxiety vis-à-vis Anderson, Hemingway and Faulkner then set their sights on their own generation, eventually eyeing each other. Anderson unwittingly brought out a side of Hemingway that many others saw and that we will see in later chapters: the fiercely competitive but patently insecure writer who had to be the best and who would disparage any who challenged him for supremacy. Whereas their parodies of Anderson varied in intensity and Faulkner was more generous toward Anderson, both felt superior to him and made the (requisite?) split. Anderson helped them refine their styles, experiments, and themes but nurtured their haughty self-conceptions as writers irrespective of his influence. Though Anderson did not remain a direct influence on either protégé’s career, he was a prominent force when their talents were crystallizing. Faulkner and Hemingway achieved more stardom and acclaim—Nobel and Pulitzer Prizes, for example—but Anderson directed each toward prominence, a debt that his protégés reluctantly acknowledged and unintentionally expressed in their parodies. In this sense, a writer is “unconsciously (anxiously) motivated by his composite, imaginative double” and insists upon “his radical independence, which is to say his visionary self-presence.”<sup>100</sup> Anderson’s impact on his mentees is very much present in their efforts to assert such “radical independence.” Their competitive awareness likewise “motivated” them as they grew into their roles as America’s literary vanguard of the early twentieth century.



In their first full decade as authors, Faulkner and Hemingway each developed a firmer grasp on their core themes, a greater control over their signature style, and revealed more pronounced artistic abilities. Concurrently, they continued shaping their performative, masculine self-images in the

99. Karl, 198.

100. Renza, 191–92.

1920s. For Linda Wagner-Martin (née Welshimer Wagner), their writing reconnected them to the postwar world: they “wrote to lead their readers to an honest vision, a situation that attempted to evoke a feeling of the real world, somehow ordered and shaped, but never frozen. For both, the craft of writing became the means to understand their confusing worlds.”<sup>101</sup> The modernist era’s creativity and opportunities informed the individual “craft of writing” by which each later judged the other’s, and by which Faulkner and Hemingway had judged Anderson’s work as insufficiently avant-garde. As these nascent modernists became competitively aware of each other and their peers in the 1930s, thematic and contextual parallels grew into a dialectical language of conflict and psychocompetitive influence. Each would soon see the other as his chief rival and be influenced to respond accordingly. Paths that had been parallel would intersect—and, increasingly often, clash—in part because one was thought to publish too frequently.

101. Wagner, 235.

## 2

# PETULANT JIBES, CATFISHLIKE UNCATFISHIVITY, AND HEMINGWAVES

## *The Rivalry Escalates in the 1930s*

*Learned a lot from [Stein] before she went haywire. Learned nothing from old Ford except mistakes not to make that he had made. Although he was damned generous about writing things about what I wrote. Learned from Anderson but it didn't last long. Imitated Ring Lardner as a kid but didn't learn from him. Nothing to learn because he doesn't know anything. All he has is a good false ear and has been around. The poor guy really hates everything but Purity. Learned from D. H. Lawrence about how to say what you felt about country.*

—Hemingway to Arnold Gingrich, April 1933

*I have created quite a sensation. I have had luncheons in my honor by magazine editors every day for a week now, besides evening parties, or people who want to see what I look like. In fact, I have learned with astonishment that I am now the most important figure in American letters. That is, I have the best future. Even Sinclair Lewis and Dreiser make engagements to see me, and Mencken is coming all the way up from Baltimore to see me on Wednesday. I'm glad I'm level-headed, not very vain. But I don't think it has gone to my head. Anyway, I am writing.*

—William to Estelle Faulkner, November 1931

By the early 1930s, Faulkner and Hemingway had become sure of their professional reputations and, as such, wanted to be the era's elite American writer. Faulkner, writing to his wife about the Southern Writers' Conference in Charlottesville, Virginia, was optimistic about his future as a prominent Southern modernist. Indeed, he was the center of attention at the conference, both for his artistic renown and his inebriated behavior, the latter of which he omits. "Faulkner's situation was new. Several writers

present were well known”—among them Ellen Glasgow, Allen Tate, Sherwood Anderson—“but no one could match the interest Faulkner generated.”<sup>1</sup> Hemingway, too, was optimistic and, as ever, independent-minded vis-à-vis other writers. He declares to *Esquire*’s editor that he has become his own writer, regardless of his past associations with Anderson, Stein, Ford, and others—and despite his earlier admission of Pound’s and Joyce’s influence in the same letter. Hemingway implies that he is enough of an expert on literature to assess a handful of his supportive predecessors. Early in the decade, Faulkner and Hemingway had begun to see themselves as major literary figures, for they had begun to move to the center of twentieth-century American writing; between them, they would publish seventeen books and numerous stories and articles by 1940. The tone of these letters shows Faulkner and Hemingway both exuding confidence and wanting to make a name for himself—not as just another modernist, but “the most important figure in American letters.”

Whereas Faulkner and Hemingway looked within to develop their respective talents and public images during the 1920s, they looked without in the 1930s and saw themselves in the larger context of the American literary scene. As such, they—Hemingway more so than Faulkner—began comparing themselves to other writers, particularly to each other. Their fiction, nonfiction, and letters fueled such mutual evaluation; in turn, several texts of the 1930s sparked the intertextual dialectic that persisted throughout their competing careers. The reading world knew of them and their writing abilities, and, during the 1930s, both men became more aware of each other and of an impending—perhaps even necessary—rivalry.

Their intertextual jousting began with Hemingway’s critique of Faulkner’s “prolific” work in *Death in the Afternoon*, continued with Faulkner’s response in *The Wild Palms*, and progressed through several other fictional, nonfictional, and epistolary texts in the interim. They began using letters to others as a venue of criticism and cross-reference, not writing letters to each other until 1947. As would be the case in later decades, their correspondence of the 1930s offers respect and judgment in an indirect epistolary dynamic that intensified in the 1940s and 1950s as their paths continued to clash, and as Faulkner began to edge out Hemingway in terms of literary prominence. “[E]ach believed himself to be capable of becoming a great—even an ‘immortal’ writer,” hence their strident competitiveness and desires to be more famous and highly regarded as they became more aware of one another.<sup>2</sup> Hemingway regarded himself as the authorial Alpha Male of the

1. Minter, 133.

2. Rovit and Waldhorn, 14–15.

modernist generation and wanted to eclipse Faulkner and their coevals, but he felt threatened when Faulkner proved himself worthy to challenge his imagined position of superiority. Faulkner's aspirations were no less lofty, but his means of expressing them were more subtle and self-confident.

Faulkner's and Hemingway's ambitions to be noteworthy authors were realized to varying degrees in the 1930s, thanks in part to their significant written output and in part to their increased publicity and gendered personae. While their fame varied much in scope—Hemingway always subjected himself to more public exposure—it varied less in effect. That both men attracted attention on their own affected their relationship: in particular, their increased prominence brought out Hemingway's ardent competitiveness. While Faulkner was not as outspokenly critical of Hemingway, he did seek to eclipse him, to make a better name for himself. In the process, a marked professional agon emerged between them during the 1930s and continued until their deaths in the early 1960s.

### FAULKNER'S "MULTIPLE SENSE OF SELF" AS "THE COMING MAN"

Whereas Hemingway mobilized his nonfiction to present his multifaceted persona, Faulkner primarily used his fiction to stage what James Watson has aptly termed a "multiple sense of self."<sup>3</sup> Watson complements Judith Butler when he states that Faulkner's "self-presentation and performance" buttressed his masculine personality and "are manifested in Faulkner's life in his regularly putting himself forward in the guises and disguises of a moment—gentleman, dandy, soldier, and farmer are familiar ones—as well as in his art, where these and other personae are separate but interlocking elements of his fictional representation."<sup>4</sup> As Hemingway was becoming the writer-as-celebrity in the 1930s, Faulkner was becoming more the writer-as-writer who was conscious of his image. In this case, the former author embodied an "international myth of masculinity," and the latter became "the chronicler of a mythical version of his native land," each refitting modernism's use of myth in an American culture and context.<sup>5</sup> Faulkner was still in the public eye yet not as active in seeking attention, perhaps to his benefit. In the early 1930s, he crafted and performed his persona just as adeptly as when he limped and told war stories in Oxford and New Orleans in the 1920s. He self-consciously adopted "dramatizing poses of masculinity" that "rivalled"

3. Watson, 2.

4. *Ibid.*, 5.

5. Meindl, 376.

Hemingway's in their impact. For Susan Donaldson, Faulkner was "photographed throughout his life striking multiple, and often contradictory, masculine attitudes": among them veteran, "rough-and-ready hunter," pilot, horseman, and patriarch.<sup>6</sup> These self-selected roles emblemize modernist-era manhood and evince a Butlerian performance that persisted throughout Faulkner's life, eventually including a form of what can be termed *Southern literary sage* in the late 1950s, particularly when Faulkner was in Japan, Virginia, and West Point.

Early in the decade, Faulkner brought this multifaceted, gendered self-image to Hollywood. He found himself in a brighter spotlight when he signed his first contract with MGM in 1931 and was paid \$500 per week for six weeks.<sup>7</sup> Thus began Faulkner's decades-long, sporadic relationship with Hollywood as both screenwriter and adapted author: "Turn About" was released in 1933 as *Today We Live*, and the highly popular *Sanctuary* was released in the same year as *The Story of Temple Drake*. Faulkner worked on a host of films in the 1930s and 1940s, most notably adaptations of Raymond Chandler's *The Big Sleep* and Hemingway's *To Have and Have Not*. While living in California in the 1930s, Faulkner associated himself with Howard Hawks, Clark Gable, and other major Hollywood figures. When he accompanied the men on a hunting trip in October 1932, Blotner tells us, he had connected himself to a much larger world than he had been used to in Oxford:

"Mr. Faulkner," [Gable] said, "what do you think somebody should read if he wants to read the best modern books? Who would you say are the best living writers?"

After a moment, Faulkner answered. "Ernest Hemingway, Willa Cather, Thomas Mann, John Dos Passos, and myself."

Gable took a moment to absorb that information. "Oh," he said. "Do you write?"

"Yes, Mr. Gable," Faulkner replied. "What do you do?"<sup>8</sup>

This nod to Hemingway is complimentary and a touch self-serving; as he would famously do in 1947, Faulkner suggests both are among "the best living writers." As we saw in Hemingway's letter to Gingrich above, Faulkner presented himself to Hawks and Gable as a literary authority worthy of attention. At this point, his professional ego was growing—he would need such healthy creative self-esteem when crossing swords with Hemingway.

Faulkner's intermittent work in Hollywood affected his fiction writing

6. Donaldson, 3.

7. Minter, 139.

8. Qtd. in Blotner, *Faulkner*, 310.

and financial well-being, and his letters to his editors and agents throughout the decade point toward his anxieties. He was highly concerned with his various MGM contracts, the profits he received from stories and screenplays, and the advances from his publishers. As Fitzgerald had done when faced with financial concerns in the 1920s and 1930s, Faulkner published stories in *The Saturday Evening Post*, among other mainstream periodicals.<sup>9</sup> Faulkner worked on what became *Absalom, Absalom!* while in Hollywood but sensed the difficulties of managing the competing demands of making money and being a legitimate literary novelist. His monetary needs would have a deleterious effect on his aesthetic energies in the 1930s. In an August 1934 letter to the agent Morton Goldman, Faulkner sounded off about writing primarily for money for the *Post*, which published four stories but rejected others: “As far as I am concerned, while I have to write trash, I don’t care who buys it, as long as they pay the best price I can get; doubtless the *Post* feels the same way about it.”<sup>10</sup> Faulkner felt that writing “trash” was necessary to the degree that it brought him sufficient financial stability to write serious fiction and match Hemingway in terms of reputation, productivity, quality, and acclaim. He never enjoyed Hemingway’s material successes in the 1930s or any other decade. Consequently, he did not travel as much as Hemingway did and had to “write trash” to stabilize himself and his growing family financially. He did not have an Uncle Gus Pfeiffer to finance an African safari or buy a home in Key West, as Hemingway had through his second wife, Pauline. Perhaps more valuably, Faulkner had more time and energy to write fiction in his dimmer public spotlight, despite having to negotiate scripts, “trash,” and his own literary efforts. Both eventually realized the effects of Faulkner’s more controlled celebrity: Faulkner became a more heralded writer than Hemingway in the 1950s, very much to Hemingway’s vexation and regardless of his own great influence.

Whereas Faulkner was relatively anonymous outside the South in the mid-1920s until *The Sound and the Fury* was published in 1929, he became more widely recognized by American and European critics in the early 1930s. The esteemed novelist Arnold Bennett, reviewing *Soldiers’ Pay* in London’s *Evening Standard*, proclaimed that “Faulkner is the coming man. He has inexhaustible invention, powerful imagination, a wondrous gift of characterisation, a finished skill in dialogue; and he writes generally like an angel. None of the arrived American stars can surpass him when he is at

9. Jones, *passim*. In this sense, the recent work done by Tom Cerasulo in *Authors Out Here: Fitzgerald, West, Parker, and Schulberg in Hollywood* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2010) about Hollywood as somewhat creatively constructive can further contextualize Faulkner’s screenwriting activities.

10. Faulkner, *Selected Letters of William Faulkner*, 84.



his best.” Another reviewer in the same periodical ranked Faulkner above two of the era’s major figures: D. H. Lawrence and Hemingway.<sup>11</sup> He was, in a sense, elevated closer to Hemingway’s level of fame as he received more critical attention than he had in the 1920s. Hemingway came to resent this and perceive Faulkner agonistically, more so than he did his other, seemingly less talented and promising contemporaries.

### HEMINGWAY AS “THE ARCHITECT OF HIS PUBLIC REPUTATION”

Hemingway, ever craving public attention, kept his name in his readers’ minds when he was not publishing fiction, largely through his much-read *Esquire* pieces, publicity, and work with the North American Newspaper Alliance during the Spanish Civil War. He published some fiction during the decade, yet his nonfiction took center stage before *For Whom the Bell Tolls* effectively brought his fiction back into the spotlight in 1940. Hemingway’s 1930s’ nonfiction—*Death in the Afternoon*, *Green Hills of Africa*, and various journalistic pieces—promoted his writer-as-celebrity status. Above all, *Death in the Afternoon* “formulated his public personality” inasmuch as “his personality so dominates the book.”<sup>12</sup> Hemingway’s portrait of the artist vis-à-vis the Spanish bullfight is comprised of nine roles—“sportsman, manly man, exposé of sham, arbiter of taste, world traveler, *bon vivant*, insider, stoic and battle-scarred veteran, and heroic artist”—each rooted in and epitomized by Hemingway himself.<sup>13</sup>

While Hemingway’s robust public personality actively courted attention, his more private side shied away from it. Alternately outgoing and taciturn regarding publicity, Hemingway became a literary celebrity who attracted attention for his artistic output, masculine self-image, and some of his physical and verbal confrontations with critics and writers, due in part to his own efforts.<sup>14</sup> He sometimes tried to downplay, even avoid, excessive media attention, but he only attracted more attention by doing so. He actively sought fame and relished his literary celebrity, regardless (even because) of his occasional requests for privacy. Faulkner, Fitzgerald, and Steinbeck achieved significant levels of fame, but none could compare their fame to Hemingway’s

11. Qtd. in Blotner, *Faulkner*, 263.

12. Raeburn, 38.

13. *Ibid.*, 44.

14. Among other scholarly works, Scott Donaldson’s *By Force of Will* and *Hemingway vs. Fitzgerald* examine how Hemingway interwove his public persona with his writing, particularly his nonfiction pieces.

in scope or intensity. No other writers so consciously, or so tightly, braided their writing and personality to become famous for what they wrote, what persona they enacted, and what they did when not writing. The image of the artist was essential to an appreciation of the artist's work:

Far from being either the unwitting or the unwilling recipient of this personal attention as he liked to intimate he was, Hemingway was the architect of his public reputation. Early in his career, he began to shape a public personality which quickly became one of his most famous creations, during his lifetime probably his most famous one. For the rest of his career he advertised his public personality in his considerable body of nonfiction, for whatever his nominal subject, his real subject was himself.<sup>15</sup>

As writer and “architect,” Hemingway was highly concerned with his work's and persona's public reception. The nine roles of his nonfiction projected a multifaceted image; in a way, he had achieved his own “multiple sense of self,” to use Watson's description of Faulkner. His image of the masculine author encompassed writing, physical activities, war, bullfighting, and other extracreative endeavors, all of which he eagerly and self-awarely performed.

In this sense, Hemingway's frequent and willful “acts of genuine theater” embodied “staged actions activating codes both theatrical and cultural.” He was, furthermore, a knowing performer in “a theater of manhood-on-display in which the audience's interpretive and evaluative responses crucially affect its dramatic significance.”<sup>16</sup> Though they projected themselves as men differently, Faulkner and Hemingway superimposed their maleness on their writing, self-images, and competitive temperaments, stressing a “*theatrical representation* of masculinity” in keeping with Judith Butler's performative model of gender.<sup>17</sup> Enacting his masculinity so vehemently, Hemingway felt himself in a heated rivalry with his contemporaries and many predecessors, wanting to outdo Stendhal, James, and Dostoyevsky and, in turn, to be more critically acclaimed than Anderson, Dos Passos, and certainly Faulkner.

Oftentimes, he would express his competitive feelings in print—for example, his parody of Stein in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, or his jab at Fitzgerald in “The Snows of Kilimanjaro,” to name only two. In the former, Robert Jordan says, “A rose is a rose is an onion. [ . . . ] An onion is an onion is an onion’ [ . . . ] and, he thought, a stone is a stein is a rock is a boulder is a pebble,”<sup>18</sup> punning references to Stein's “Sacred Emily” (1922),

15. Raeburn, 7.

16. Strychacz, 5–6.

17. Ibid., 8.

18. Hemingway, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, 289.

name, and literary and conversational idioms. In the latter, Harry remembers a friend, named Julian in the story but suggestive of Fitzgerald, and his “romantic awe” of the upper class.<sup>19</sup> The original August 1936 *Esquire* version of the story—published in the same issue as Fitzgerald’s “Afternoon of an Author”—mentioned Fitzgerald by name, with Harry remembering “poor Scott Fitzgerald and his romantic awe.”<sup>20</sup> Fitzgerald eventually asked Hemingway and Max Perkins to omit such an explicit reference, which Hemingway did by changing “Scott” to “Julian” in the version published in *The Fifth Column and the First Forty-Nine Stories* (1938). Virtually no one, it seemed, was safe from Hemingway’s derision, save perhaps Joyce and Pound.

Yet, it was different with Faulkner. Hemingway seems to have felt especially challenged by Faulkner, who felt a similar challenge in return. At times, however, his adversarial view of the contemporary literary scene was expressed in action, thus fueling the gossip mill that the media and Hemingway had effectively coauthored. He often interpreted criticisms of his work as slights against his manhood, as in his brawl with Wallace Stevens when the poet was in Florida in February 1936. Hemingway wrote to Sara Murphy later that month, Stevens “had made [Hemingway’s sister Ursula] cry by telling her forcefully what a sap I was, no man, etc. [ . . . ] Mr. Stevens swung that same fabled punch but fortunately [fortunately?] missed and I knocked all of him down several times and gave him a good beating.”<sup>21</sup> Though Hemingway is probably exaggerating, he and Stevens fought, and Stevens sought medical attention. The story of this fight was printed in several local newspapers, thus brightening the spotlight on his personal life and machismo.<sup>22</sup> Hemingway had heard Stevens’s belittling of his work second-hand and saw it as an attack on his manhood; as such, his Code response was not a printed attack but a fistfight. This fits the Hemingway persona—tough, bellicose, macho, and aware of his literary worth.

Like many writers, Hemingway was, at best, tolerant of literary critics, but he expressed contempt for one in particular in the same blustery way that he answered Stevens’s criticisms. Max Eastman’s scathing review of *Death in the Afternoon*, “Bull in the Afternoon” (*New Republic*, June 7, 1933), questioned Hemingway’s preoccupation with overdisplaying his virility in his writing, what Eastman termed his “continual sense of the obligation to put forth evidences of his red-blooded masculinity.”<sup>23</sup> He also accused Hemingway of bringing about a “veritable school of fiction writers—a literary style [ . . . ] of

19. Hemingway, “The Snows of Kilimanjaro,” 53.

20. Qtd. in Donaldson, *Hemingway vs. Fitzgerald*, 197–98.

21. Hemingway, *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters*, 439.

22. Raeburn, 58.

23. Eastman, 176.

wearing false hair on the chest.”<sup>24</sup> Hemingway was incensed by this review and seized on the accusation of “false hair on the chest” in particular; his anger festered until he by chance found himself face to face with Eastman in Max Perkins’s office in August 1937. Their verbal sparring—in which Eastman denied doubting Hemingway’s masculinity—soon led to Hemingway’s comparing his hirsute chest with Eastman’s nearly hairless chest, Hemingway hitting Eastman with a book, and then to fisticuffs. Though neither man “won” as such, the *New York Times* published an account of this incident, thus garnering further publicity for Hemingway and, yet again, underscoring his masculinity.<sup>25</sup>

In the spring of 1931, Perkins risked unsettling Hemingway when he considered pursuing Faulkner, whose *Sanctuary* had garnered much attention and who (after numerous rejections) had published five stories in *Scribner’s*: “Dry September” (January 1931), “Death Drag” (January 1932), “There Was a Queen” (January 1933), “Mule in the Yard” (August 1934), and “The Brooch” (January 1936).<sup>26</sup> As Scribners already had Hemingway, Wolfe, and Fitzgerald as its marquee names, Perkins probably feared the consequences of adding Faulkner to his ranks. Perkins must have known that the territorial Hemingway would not have accepted Faulkner as a fellow Scribners author, in part because of Faulkner’s vast potential. Hemingway was then working on *Death in the Afternoon*; hearing (or suspecting) that Faulkner had caught *his* editor’s eye may have given him further impetus to malign Faulkner in the text, which came out the next fall. John Hall Wheelock, then a Scribners editor, thought “Max didn’t follow through on Faulkner just then because he was afraid of arousing Hemingway’s jealousy”; “in Hemingway’s mind, there was no more room in Max’s life for another power so threatening as William Faulkner. Hemingway’s was a mighty ego, and Max knew it.”<sup>27</sup> Hemingway had by then “a renewed determination to outwrite everyone else in the world”; as he had told Perkins in April 1931 “Faulkner was ‘damned good when good but often unnecessary.’ Perkins agreed.”<sup>28</sup> Hemingway, whose aesthetic framework stressed control, criticized Faulkner’s verbose, free-associative style, which showed potential but lacked the discipline to eliminate what Hemingway saw as some his superfluous passages, literary showmanship, and stylistic flair. When Hemingway began to know much more about Faulkner in the early 1930s, he became a threat—probably the only substantial one—to his “mighty ego” and had to be seen as an adversary.

24. Ibid.

25. Berg, 325–26.

26. Jones, *passim*.

27. Qtd. in Berg, 181.

28. Ibid., 180.

As they strove to be America's über-modernist in the 1930s, both men began trading psychocompetitive influence. Among writers, they were arguably each other's principal audience, but they responded to criticisms very differently. Perhaps more insecure, Hemingway was more outspokenly competitive with Faulkner yet felt challenged by his artistic reputation, feeding into some anxiety over Faulkner's influence. That Faulkner received comparable approbation and Perkins's attention made Hemingway realize that he had competition for his perceived literary "first place." As he did with other influential authors such as Stein and Fitzgerald, Hemingway was motivated by Faulkner's potential and acclaim to prove his own superiority to the literary field, in part by disparaging his contemporaries in print.

Perhaps more self-confident, Faulkner sensed that Hemingway challenged his own professional aspirations; he responded to and competed with him less severely but eagerly nonetheless. Little of Faulkner's signature style bears Hemingway's artistic influence, but Faulkner's repeated efforts to make himself look superior point toward a degree of psychocompetitive influence. Wanting to make the most indelible literary mark, he may have felt challenged by the promise he saw in Hemingway to take more artistic risks. Faulkner seems to have been aware of Hemingway more than any other author of their generation, given the breadth of their relationship-as-rivalry and Faulkner's repeated engagement with him. Arguably, his risks were more avant-garde, his rewards and acclaim more significant. That their intertextual sparring progressed over three decades indicates that Faulkner and Hemingway were highly agonistic and highly aware of each other. Their rivalry pushed each man in his artistic endeavors, in some respects helping each other achieve further canonical stature.

### "THE BOOK OF FAULKNER'S EARLY CRAP"

As Faulkner and Hemingway began to acknowledge each other's competitive weight, they wrote in each other's shadow from the 1930s onward, starting with *Salmagundi*, a limited-edition printing of Faulkner's early writings published by Paul Romaine's Casanova Book Shop in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.<sup>29</sup> *Salmagundi* was ordinarily a literary journal, but the April 30, 1932, issue collected eight of Faulkner's New Orleans-era writings (six poems and two essays), along with Hemingway's early poem "Ultimately" printed on the back cover.<sup>30</sup> Hemingway's poem was included at Romaine's behest, because

29. Blotner, *Faulkner*, 299; Karl, 476.

30. The Faulkner poems were "New Orleans," "The Faun," "Dying Gladiator," "Portrait,"

Romaine thought “Ultimately” would “enhance the value of his small limited edition.”<sup>31</sup> While the publication of *Salmagundi* is in itself relatively unimportant, as is its apprentice work, it commenced the use of letters as a means for Faulkner and Hemingway to discuss each other to third parties. This co-publication got them to see each other as coevals who often wrote against the other’s work, examples, and ideas. Hemingway’s feelings about being published with Faulkner were mixed, as a few letters indicate. Writing to Romaine on August 9, he referred to *Salmagundi* as “the book of Faulkner’s early crap.”<sup>32</sup> Hemingway used some more choice phrasing when writing to Louis Henry Cohn (then his bibliographer) on March 28, 1932: “Ultimately” was fitting for a collection of Faulkner’s “early shit,” deprecating himself as much as Faulkner.<sup>33</sup> Hemingway did, perhaps surprisingly, pass along some encouragement to Faulkner through Romaine, calling him “a good skate” in a letter from earlier in the year.<sup>34</sup>

Happy that things were falling into place for *Salmagundi*’s publication and that Hemingway was being supportive, Faulkner wrote to Romaine, “The word from Hemingway is splendid. This is the second time he has said something about me that I wish I had thought to say first,”<sup>35</sup> leaving the first time that Hemingway had complimented him unspecified. Faulkner had expressed support for Hemingway, seeing him as his most important contemporary. In an interview for the New York *Herald Tribune* from November 14, 1931, Faulkner remarked, “The two books I like best are *Moby[-]Dick* and *The Nigger of the Narcissus* [ . . . ] but I wouldn’t say that Melville or Conrad was “my favorite author.” I’d just like to have written those two books more than any others I can think of.” Moreover: “He admires the work of Ernest Hemingway, whom he has never met. ‘I think he’s the best we’ve got.’”<sup>36</sup> When he realized that he would see his name with Hemingway’s on *Salmagundi*’s cover, Faulkner knew something about the man who would say much about him, and about whom he would say much, in the coming years.

*Salmagundi* contains early, somewhat undeveloped material from both authors. However, it allowed Faulkner and Hemingway to recognize each other on a broadening competitive grid. That Hemingway responded with

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“The Lilacs,” and “L’Après-Midi d’un Faune,” and the essays were “On Criticism” and “Verse Old and Nascent: A Pilgrimage” (Karl, 476). Hemingway’s poem is short and rather trite, as was most of his 1920s poetry: “He tried to spit out the truth; / Dry mouthed at first, / He drooled and slobbered in the end; / Truth dribbling his chin.”

31. Baker, 227.

32. Hemingway, *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters*, 366.

33. Qtd. in Baker, 227, 603n.

34. *Ibid.*, 227.

35. Faulkner, *Selected Letters of William Faulkner*, 61.

36. Qtd. in Meriwether and Millgate, 21.

praise as well as derision—using both “a good skate” and “early crap” to refer, respectively, to Faulkner and his work—embodies how both men would judge each other for the rest of their careers. Their competition necessitated a mix of rivalry and respect; they would often qualify any shared praise, typically with an implied or actual *but*. A few months after *Salmagundi* bore their names on its covers, Hemingway took a more definitive swing at Faulkner, who he thought was a bit too productive. The time for sizing-up from a safe distance was over.

### “HE’S PROLIFIC TOO”<sup>37</sup>

Hemingway’s *Death in the Afternoon* was the first intertext of dialectical American modernism and eager competition. Given Hemingway’s fierce competitiveness in regard to other writers, it should not be surprising that the first broadside was his. Throughout the first few chapters, the reader encounters a series of dialogues between a Hemingway-esque narrator (equally well-schooled in bullfighting and writing) and an Old Lady (unschooled in bullfighting and, thus, a foil for the narrator’s expertise). Through these conversations, the narrator educates the Old Lady, and by extension the reader, about bullfighting, Spanish history and culture, and writing. This book is a key Hemingway text because it clearly articulated his larger artistic aims, which he often contradistinguished from Faulkner’s. *Death in the Afternoon* was Hemingway’s first nonfiction book, a trend which he continued in *Green Hills of Africa* and the posthumous *A Moveable Feast*, *The Dangerous Summer*, and *Under Kilimanjaro*. The text allowed him to crisscross bullfighting and writing, highlight their similarities, and proclaim his self-ascribed expertise. This text, for Raeburn, helped Hemingway amplify his persona as writer, journalist, war veteran, aficionado, and so forth. At one level about the history, craft, and cultural significance of the Spanish *toreo*, the text outlined Hemingway’s Iceberg Principle, ideas for characterization and style (“When writing a novel a writer should create living people, people not characters. [ . . . ] Prose is architecture, not interior decoration, and the Baroque is over”), and creative objectives, namely capturing “the real thing, the sequence of motion and fact.”<sup>38</sup>

Hemingway mentions Stein, Huxley, Whittier, and other writers throughout the text to articulate his own artistic ideas. Whereas he mentions

37. Parts of this section—as well as that discussing *The Wild Palms*—were published in the *South Atlantic Review* 72 (Fall 2006).

38. Raeburn, 2; Hemingway, *Death in the Afternoon*, 191.



some writers passingly—noting, for example, that his wife had read Dashiell Hammett's *The Dain Curse* aloud to him<sup>39</sup>—he offers more of a judgment of Faulkner, one he claimed should be taken humorously. Hemingway always distinguished his artistic paradigm from Faulkner's; this book expresses his views about the ideal art being controlled, detailed, and stylistically direct. Faulkner, having published *The Sound and the Fury* three years earlier and about to publish *Light in August* on October 6, clearly chose a different signature style, as much of Hemingway's audience knew. With *Mosquitoes* and recent potboiler *Sanctuary* in mind, Hemingway sniped at Faulkner's prodigious output:

My operatives tell me that through the fine work of Mr. William Faulkner publishers now will publish anything rather than to try to get you to delete the better portions of your works, and I look forward to writing of those days of my youth which were spent in the finest whorehouses in the land amid the most brilliant society there found. I had been saving this background to write of in my old age when with the aid of distance I could examine it most clearly.

*Old Lady:* Has this Mr. Faulkner written well of these places?

Splendidly, Madame. Mr. Faulkner writes admirably of them. He writes the best of them of any writer I have read for many years.

*Old Lady:* I must buy his works.

Madame, you can't go wrong on Faulkner. He's prolific too. By the time you get them ordered there'll be new ones out.

*Old Lady:* If they are as you say there cannot be too many.

Madame, you voice my own opinion.<sup>40</sup>

The narrator's final remark is clearly sarcastic and moderately inaccurate: by 1932, Faulkner had published seven major books to Hemingway's five, not a substantial difference. For Hemingway, Faulkner publishes too frequently, is careless, and writes mediocre work. His publishers "will publish anything" of his without cuts or revisions, implying that his work is sub-par, undisciplined, and in need of editing. The sarcastic "Mr. Faulkner writes admirably of them" insinuates that his use of brothels in *Mosquitoes* and *Sanctuary* is suspect and written without the proper perspective, which perspective Hemingway suggests that *he* has as the more macho, sexually experienced man. In the midst of their struggle to define a superior modernist style, Hemingway expressed similar admonitions throughout his career: Faulkner

39. Hemingway, *Death in the Afternoon*, 228.

40. *Ibid.*, 173.



was for him too wordy and uncontrolled, while Hemingway saw himself creating the controlled, reserved style that he felt exemplified true art. For his part, Faulkner would return fire in *The Wild Palms* and later letters with his own assessments of the too-controlled Hemingway.

Hemingway's original remark about Faulkner was a bit different, as the typescript reveals. Whereas the published version ends Chapter 14 with "Madame, you voice my own opinion," page 132-B of the typescript (dated late 1931 or early 1932) contains a handwritten insertion after this sentence: "It is a damned fine thing to have him writing and pleases me greatly." While this sentence never found its way into the final text,<sup>41</sup> it hints at a respect counterbalancing the earlier sarcasm. Had this sentence been included in the published text, his seeming compliment would have been slightly more pronounced, but still critical. The typescript's reference to Faulkner is indirect praise, as would be their later qualified assessments of each other. Hemingway attests that reading Faulkner is aesthetically pleasing, although he still feels that Faulkner published too much "damned fine" and unedited material.

Hemingway makes a passing reference to Faulkner later in the book as well. In Chapter 15, the Old Lady requests that the narrator tell her a story, asking "Do you know any of the kind of stories Mr. Faulkner writes?" and the narrator responds, "A few, Madame, but told baldly they might not please you."<sup>42</sup> This reference lacks the overt critical edge of the first one, bordering on a backhanded compliment. Hemingway's persona-narrator implies that he cannot tell Faulkner's stories in an aesthetically pleasing way, suggesting in part that the stories are good when written by Faulkner himself. However, there still is a critical undertone to "told baldly." For, Hemingway Faulkner's stylistic adornment in, for example, *Sanctuary* disguises the troublesome aspects of its plot: Popeye's killing Tommy and raping Temple with a corncob. If the story proper were "told baldly"—which is to say, without what Hemingway saw as Faulkner's flourish and rhetoric—then the Old Lady would presumably be bothered by Popeye's depraved behavior and Faulkner's disturbing imagery, particularly of a corncob being used as a weapon of sexual violence.<sup>43</sup> Faulkner's using his ornate style to "hide" such

41. Hemingway, *Death in the Afternoon* typescript. From the minimal work that I have done with the manuscript, it is hard to determine whose choice it was not to include the handwritten change. It could have been Perkins, Hemingway could have changed his mind and decided against it, or he could have followed some of "Dos Passos's contributions to the editing" and "general suggestions" at the galley stage (Trogdon, 111). My thanks go to Robert Trogdon for suggesting that I examine the typescript of *Death in the Afternoon* in June 2004.

42. Hemingway, *Death in the Afternoon*, 179.

43. In several letters and in *Across the River and into the Trees* (1950), Hemingway would use "Corncob" to refer to Faulkner, a derogatory moniker that revealed his resentment of his

a distressing plot comprised what Hemingway would call his “conning” and trickery in the 1950s as their rivalry was at its peak. By including a subtle, reserved compliment only six pages after a sarcastic one, Hemingway seems to have been trying to counterbalance his earlier causticity and “jealousy.”<sup>44</sup> Although he thinks that Faulkner’s work needs editing, Hemingway suggests that his stylization prevents his work from coming across “baldly.” This echoes Hemingway’s comment to Perkins in 1931 that Faulkner sometimes overwrote and should, instead, have underwritten as he himself did, yet again judging Faulkner by his own standards.

Peculiarly, though not surprisingly, these criticisms of Faulkner were unprovoked. Faulkner had expressed no public criticisms of Hemingway, and there was no discernible animosity between them. They knew of each other—Hemingway at least knew of the brothels in *Mosquitoes* and *Sanctuary*—but the ever-competitive Hemingway wanted to make the first strike. In all likelihood, Hemingway was beginning to feel threatened by Faulkner and treated him accordingly, while occasionally admitting that he admired his artistry. Hemingway’s criticism of Faulkner sharply distinguishes their writing and puts forth his own as better. He regularly defined his own aesthetic against other authors—his was an aesthetic of competitive creativity, which he thought superior to others’.

Despite such an aesthetic, Hemingway claimed that he had not written expressly to criticize Faulkner. He and Robert Coates debated *Death in the Afternoon*’s “prolific” reference, after Coates lamented the book’s ill-tempered references to other writers: it was “a strange book, childish, here and there, in its small-boy wickedness of vocabulary; bitter, and even morbid in its endless preoccupation with fatality. As far as momentary popularity goes, it seems almost a suicidal book in its deliberate flouting of reader and critic alike.”<sup>45</sup> Coates disliked this “bitter” treatment of other writers, “passages in which his bitterness descends into petulance (as in his gibes at William Faulkner, who has done him no harm save to come under his influence”), and comments on Eliot, Cocteau, and Huxley.”<sup>46</sup> The book’s mixed sarcasm and praise could account for, to Hemingway’s mind, Coates’s misunderstanding his tone and narratorial presence.

Hemingway disagreed with Coates’s assessments. On October 5, he wrote Coates a letter that was eventually printed in the November 5 *New Yorker*, thus clarifying his stance to a large readership in a public forum rather than in a private reply:

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Southern rival. See Chapter 4.

44. Monteiro, “The Faulkner–Hemingway Rivalry,” 75.

45. Coates, 162.

46. *Ibid.*, 161.

There weren't any cracks against Faulkner. You read it over and you will see. Your interpretations, opinions and judgments are naturally none of my god-damned business-es and would not comment on them. This is only a question of fact. There was a mention [of Faulkner], a pretty damned friendly mention.

[ . . . . ]

But I'm damned if I wrote any petulant jibes against Faulkner and the hell with you telling citizens that I did.

All the petulant jibes you like against Waldo Frank [ . . . ] or anyone for whom I have no particular respect. But I have plenty of respect for Faulkner and wish him all luck. That does not mean that I would not joke about him. There are no subjects that I would not jest about if the jest was funny enough [ . . . . ] If it was not funny to you that is my, or perhaps your, hard luck.<sup>47</sup>

Ever aware of his public image, Hemingway claims that readers and reviewers should interpret his comment as "a pretty damned friendly mention" to be taken ironically, much as he had encouraged Anderson to read the much crueler *The Torrents of Spring* a few years earlier. In response, Coates wrote Hemingway on October 17. Having disagreed with the book's tone, Coates also disagreed with the author's defense of it:

Well, now, I thought you did mean to take a crack at Faulkner. If you didn't, I don't see why you didn't; there's one due him. Furthermore, if you didn't, you picked awfully odd things to compliment him about. If that was a pat on the back about his being prolific, etc., it was one that must have caught him off balance.

[ . . . . ]

As to the Faulkner business, my interpretation is one thing and your intention is another, and I'm quite willing to let you have your say about it in my column. I'd print your letter right off, only I see that your suggestion or permission to do so was put on as an afterthought, and when I got it typed out I saw that some parts of it sounded a little cockeyed, or as if there'd been a bottle of Canadian rye somewhere around when you wrote it.<sup>48</sup>

Coates's thinking that Faulkner was in line for a "crack" notwithstanding, Hemingway's complex depiction of Faulkner in the text and the *New Yorker* letter was likely meant to be ambiguous. Hemingway seems to have started defining himself against Faulkner, much as Faulkner would soon do in his

47. Hemingway, *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters*, 368–69.

48. Coates, Letter to Ernest Hemingway, October 17, 1932.

own work and correspondence. Coates also gave Hemingway the opportunity to revise his *New Yorker* letter before it went to press, which he apparently did not do—the published letter must have been meant to direct such “odd,” unbalancing commentary Faulkner’s way. Ironically, Coates’s wondering if Hemingway’s criticisms were fueled by alcohol anticipates Hemingway’s later derisions of *Requiem for a Nun*, which he thought weakened by Faulkner’s alcoholism. In this case, Hemingway’s opening salvo was set off by his professional competitiveness, gendered sense of self, and the kind of insecurity seen in his tense relationships with other authors.

If we follow Hemingway’s explanation, then Cocteau, Huxley, Eliot, and Frank—also mentioned in this letter—were deservedly criticized, but not Faulkner. Hemingway admits his respect, his sniping and alleged disparagement to the contrary notwithstanding. This simply may have been a misunderstood joke, or Hemingway may be misrepresenting his own words as he would do in later years. Hemingway was never hesitant to judge other writers, but it seems that he respected—or was intimidated by—Faulkner more than any other contemporary. While his assertion that he has “plenty of respect for Faulkner” is not completely insincere, Hemingway often criticized and lauded him, sometimes in the same sentence or text. As “he insisted disingenuously,” George Monteiro argues, Hemingway indicated that Faulkner did not fit his own artistic paradigm while insinuating that Faulkner was “undiscriminating and undisciplined.”<sup>49</sup> Though he admits some esteem—that his coeval “writes admirably” and “the best” about brothels—this commentary has a strong critical undertone. Hemingway may have thought that Faulkner published too many books, but he also seemed to think that what he published had artistic merit comparable to his own.

Hemingway’s swipe at Faulkner’s high productivity was another way that he voiced his own aggressive tendencies and presented himself as a knowledgeable, experienced writer with the faculty to pass judgment on his contemporaries. He likely meant what he wrote, despite his later rebuttal of Coates’s review and his perhaps not wanting to appear as judgmental as his “pretty damned friendly mention” of Faulkner made him seem. Hemingway did not mind being seen as judgmental of Frank or Cocteau, “for whom [he had] no particular respect.” Since *Death in the Afternoon* delineates Hemingway’s signature artistic aims, one would expect him to differentiate himself from other writers. A fellow modernist of equal, possibly greater, worth, Faulkner was more *present* for him than any other contemporary. There are no comparable references to Fitzgerald, Dos Passos, or others in the text. That he singled out Faulkner suggests that he saw his own aesthetic blueprint as a foil. For Rovit and Waldhorn, the authors’

49. Monteiro, “The Faulkner–Hemingway Rivalry,” 76.

competitive zeal ran deep and eventually, on Hemingway's part, grew bitter. Faulkner's lush volubility and Hemingway's sparse minimalism; Faulkner, courtly, private, stubborn, in some sense a fugitive in his own country; Hemingway, larger than life, a creature of the rotogravure sections, a gaudy public exile wherever he lived. Each respected, admired, and was somewhat nettled by the other's work, but each was militantly resolute to guard his own arduous path to literary excellence.<sup>50</sup>

Hemingway and Faulkner were then at opposite, competing poles—"each [ . . . ] an almost perfectly inverted mirror image of the other," each stridently competitive.<sup>51</sup> One might also see between them a growing intrigue of the artistic "other," hence the complementary parallels, allusions, and joint criticisms forming the subtext of many subsequent novels, stories, and letters.

### "READING, AND ADMIRING, *PYLON*"

While *Death in the Afternoon* historicizes the Spanish bullfight and articulates Hemingway's artistic model, it also marks the point at which Hemingway began setting himself against Faulkner in published books. Though some of their texts treated similar themes, and though *Salmagundi* had appeared in the same year as *Death in the Afternoon*, their dynamic's rivalrous edge hardened when Hemingway publicly elevated himself in the latter. Three years later in *Esquire*, Hemingway would use Faulkner as a point of reference in a mild satire of his style and usage of compound words, the first of several instances of their intertextual riffing.

*Pylon* differs from *Absalom, Absalom!* and Faulkner's other 1930s novels, yet it is important to the present analysis for its reference to Hemingway. Of importance in this novel about an air show in New Valois (virtually identical to New Orleans) is a conversation between an unnamed reporter and his editor. For the latter,

"The people who own this paper or who direct its policies or anyway who pay the salaries, fortunately or unfortunately I shant attempt to say, have no Lewises or Hemingways or even Tchekovs on the staff: one very good reason doubtless being that they do not want them, since what they want is not fiction, not even Nobel Prize fiction, but news."<sup>52</sup>

50. Rovit and Walldhorn, 157–58.

51. *Ibid.*, 157.

52. Faulkner, *Pylon*, 808.

One might assume that Faulkner would offer a biting rejoinder to Hemingway's portrait of him, but he responds somewhat generously. At most, this is a passing conversational reference to the current literary scene, as was Faulkner's self-deprecating reference to himself in *Mosquitoes*, in which a New Orleanian claims never to have heard of him. The *Pylon* reference encompasses both aspects of Hemingway's writing life—journalism and fiction—and shows that Faulkner was thinking about him contextually. Perhaps Faulkner had read *Death in the Afternoon* and the *New Yorker* letter unironically, only picking up on the quasi-complimentary aspect of Hemingway's comments, or perhaps Faulkner did not want to resort to such sniping. This passage implies that Hemingway's forte is Nobel Prize-worthy fiction. (Recall that Lewis had won the Prize in 1930.) This reference—the only one to Hemingway in the novel—illustrates how Faulkner started to see Hemingway as an artistic counterpart. Faulkner would follow up *Pylon* with a more complex reference to Hemingway in *The Wild Palms*, continuing an intertextual contest in which they traded imagery, puns, barbs, themes, and even direct references.

Having read *Pylon*, Hemingway again alluded to Faulkner in June 1935 in "On Being Shot Again," one of his many *Esquire* pieces showing a willfully enacted manhood. As such, the article was a venue in which Hemingway mildly rebuked Faulkner to an increasingly wide readership while performing his physically active, cosmopolitan, thoroughly male self-image. In such 1930s nonfiction, we can observe, as Butler does more broadly, that a "gendered self is thus produced by the regulation of attributes along culturally established lines of coherence."<sup>53</sup> The peripatetic Hemingway wrote brief articles about big-game hunting in Africa and fishing in the Gulf Stream, using *Esquire* and other periodicals to paint himself as the authority on both traditionally masculine activities while boosting sales and name recognition.

"On Being Shot Again," in which Hemingway discusses how he shot himself through both calves while fishing, indicates his knowledge of *Pylon* and, presumably, its reference to himself. This allusion is not as negative as that in *Death in the Afternoon*, but he riffs on Faulkner's use of compound words in the novel and elsewhere—such as "the physical curbmass of heads and shoulders in moiling silhouette against the lightglare, the serpentine and confettidrift, the antic passing floats" of New Valois's Mardi Gras-like carnival.<sup>54</sup> Hemingway adapts such language when he describes "two lengths of double line which now streamed in catfishlike uncatfishivity (your correspondent has been reading, and admiring, *Pylon* by Mr. William Faulkner)."<sup>55</sup>

53. Butler, 24.

54. Faulkner, *Pylon*, 811.

55. Hemingway, "On Being Shot Again," 200.

Though Hemingway claims to admire the novel, he parodies “Mr.” Faulkner’s writing, combines mild sarcasm with appreciation, and uses his own word-play to mimic Faulkner’s compound words. He shows his readers that he is active (Gulf Stream fishing), well read (knowledge of Faulkner), and competitive (parodic reference to a coeval through the neologistic “catfishlike uncatfishivity”). Faulkner would continue this verbal interplay in *The Wild Palms* four years later, perhaps most famously by referring to “heming-waves.” Between “On Being Shot Again” and *The Wild Palms*, however, he and Hemingway would each have to make artistic sense of a civil war to which each had strong personal connections, with Hemingway’s bearing some marks of Faulkner’s influence.

### “ONE TALE, ONE TELLING”<sup>56</sup>

Published two years apart—*The Unvanquished* on February 15, 1938, and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* on October 21, 1940—Faulkner’s and Hemingway’s civil war books parallel each other in symbolically rich ways. At some level, aspects of Faulkner’s style, structure, and narration informed Hemingway’s writing. Although their civil wars and authorial perspectives on them differ, Faulkner and Hemingway wrote analogous texts with: a structural-thematic focus on storytelling and memory, similar imagery, and focus on a set of resilient and courageous people on the losing side of the conflict. As such, the novels can offer a synthetic reading; the correlations and resonant parallelism between these two texts, furthermore, reveal the rivalry’s more constructive facet. One sees in them two stylistically different authors writing two thematically congruous books, partly because of one’s psychocompetitive example. Whereas the First World War spawned their early fiction and public personae, the American and Spanish Civil Wars were central to some of the authors’ mature 1930s fiction. And though their personal connection to each civil war also differed—Hemingway saw the Spanish Civil War first hand as a journalist, Faulkner grew up in a culture still reliving and retelling the American Civil War—both texts concentrate on war as it is experienced by soldiers and civilians.

The structural elements of these books point toward Faulkner’s artistic impact on Hemingway. Faulkner uses an older Bayard Sartoris as a first-person narrator looking back on his wartime experiences, and Hemingway uses a third-person omniscient narrator. Nevertheless, *The Unvanquished*

56. Parts of this section were published in *War, Literature, and the Arts* 18.1 & 2 (2006); a portion of this section was also given at the Key West Hemingway Conference in June 2004.

and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* employ stream of consciousness as Bayard (the “Old Bayard” of *Sartoris*) and Robert Jordan reflect upon their pasts, families, and war experiences. As Bayard is a first-person narrator, *The Unvanquished* is replete with Bayard’s typically Faulknerian reminiscences, thoughts, and associations—killing a Union horse with his African American companion Ringo (“Ambuscade”); seeing the remains of a railroad destroyed by Sherman’s troops (“Raid”); killing his grandmother’s murderer (“Vendée”); and confronting but not killing the man who murdered his father, his final act of moral courage (“An Odor of Verbena”). Faulkner depicts not only what Bayard experienced as a child during the Civil War and Reconstruction but also how he understands his past as an adult. In addition to his encounters with Union troops in “Ambuscade” and other stories, Bayard has a strong connection to the Civil War through family: his father (Colonel John Sartoris), grandmother (Rosa Millard), and cousin-stepmother (Drusilla Hawk).

Bayard’s stream-of-consciousness narration anticipated parts of Hemingway’s depiction of Jordan. Although Jordan is not the narrator of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Hemingway at times adopted a Faulknerian style to craft Jordan as a guiding narrative consciousness. After Jordan and Maria make love at the beginning of Chapter 13, Hemingway takes eight pages to follow Jordan’s train of thought, as it moves from post-coital musings to practical, more personal matters. Jordan then begins to worry about the Loyalists’ chances in the conflict:

Because now he was not there. He was walking beside her but his mind was thinking of the problem of the bridge now and it was all clear and hard and sharp as when a camera lens is brought into focus. [ . . . ] Stop it, he told himself. You have made love to this girl and now your head is clear, properly clear, and you start to worry. It is one thing to think you must do and it is another thing to worry. Don’t worry. You mustn’t worry. You know the things that you may have to do and you know what may happen.<sup>57</sup>

Such extended interiority was typical of Faulkner, seen in his multiple narrators and perspectives in *The Sound and the Fury*, *As I Lay Dying*, and *Absalom, Absalom!*. Yet, this type of narration was not typical of Hemingway, who had employed a more focused first-person narration in earlier novels. Although Hemingway had done this at some level with Jake Barnes and Frederic Henry, using a more avant-garde narrative consciousness for a character that was not his narrator was unusual for him. Hemingway used a

57. Hemingway, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, 161–62.



third-person omniscient narrator in “The Snows of Kilimanjaro,” as we share the dying Harry’s thoughts of his past; using third-person omniscience in the story was seemingly a kind of warm-up for doing so in the novel.

Hemingway uses a more controlled Faulknerian narrative interiority effectively throughout *For Whom the Bell Tolls*; it might be said to resemble, to a lesser degree, Faulkner’s “literary world [as] a theater of humanity,”

visible to him from every point of view, true from every point of view, at once divisible into individual lives and indivisible as a social organism. Stories could never be told from a single perspective, or by a single person, and sometimes perhaps they could not be fully told at all. In the effort of telling, however, he was fantastically adventurous, almost suicidal in his willingness to cast aside traditional modes of writing.<sup>58</sup>

The works’ dual focus on narrative and narration demonstrate a necessary multiplicity of perspectives capturing the experience of war in the post-World War One world. Although Hemingway’s novel does not approach the richness and momentum of Quentin and Shreve narrativizing the Sutpen story in *Absalom, Absalom!*, he calls attention to both “individual lives” and “social organism[s]” within the Spanish Civil War through a kind of polyvocality. Despite its traces of Faulkner, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is still more Hemingway than Faulkner, as it were. Yet Jordan, Pilar, and Maria create the narrative collectively in ways that may have been “adventurous” for Hemingway as he tried to achieve the sales and literary approbation that *A Farewell to Arms* had brought him a decade previous. *For Whom the Bell Tolls* sold very well, in part because of Hemingway’s strong popularity and the book’s difference from his other works of the decade.

Robert Jordan’s remembering his grandfather’s heroism in the Civil War, his father’s suicide, and his life as a professor at the University of Montana texture the narrative. Such interior reflections deepen Jordan, revealing how his past affects his present and future actions, and in turn how this affects his relationships with the other guerillas. Given his rich, privileged perspective, Jordan was probably Hemingway’s most psychologically complex, non-narratorial figure to date. In *The Unvanquished*, Bayard’s comparably rich first-person narration likewise privileges his perspective. As such, the ways in which he and Jordan consider their experiences through a lens of personal and national history speaks to the authors’ explorations of civil war. Their (male) Sartoris and Jordan ancestors, respectively, fought in the American Civil War and embodied a legacy of wartime courage, manhood, and legend-

58. Williamson, 6.

making that they seek to emulate. Whether he knew *The Unvanquished* or had simply read other Faulkner works, Hemingway seems to have been psychologically motivated by Faulkner to innovate his writing and, he would have hoped, to eclipse him. He did own *The Unvanquished*, along with at least thirteen other Faulkner titles.<sup>59</sup> To some degree, the reader sees events from Harry Morgan's perspective in *To Have and Have Not* in the sections he and the omniscient narrator frame, but Jordan has a more complex, diverse interior life than Harry. Using such nuanced interiority—a relatively untried practice—was a way for Hemingway to take creative risks in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* in ways comparable to those taken by Faulkner.

Though he did not write about the American Civil War as much as Faulkner did, Hemingway connects the American and Spanish Civil Wars through Jordan's consciousness. As Jordan remembers his grandfather and thinks about similar problems in Spain, Hemingway overlaps the civil wars: "There wasn't any Grant, nor any Sherman nor any Stonewall Jackson on either side so far in this war. No. Nor any Jeb Stuart either. Nor any Sheridan. It was overrun with McClellans though. The fascists had plenty of McClellans and we had at least three of them."<sup>60</sup> Jordan rues the current war's lack of the heroism and military successes brought about in the 1860s by Grant, Sherman, Stuart, and Jackson. Conversely, Jordan realizes that the war in Spain does not lack McClellan's battlefield incompetence and lamentable (for the Union, anyway) tendency to avoid combat while commanding a larger army. Frustrated with the bureaucratic, inactive, and confusing Loyalist leadership, Jordan's noting McClellan's symbolic presence further illustrates the historical foundations of the *For Whom the Bell Tolls*–*The Unvanquished* intertext.

While these texts of civil war focus on the narrativizing acts of their male protagonists, memory and storytelling are crucial to other characters. Each work's supporting characters—Colonel Sartoris, Rosa Millard, and Drusilla Hawk; Pilar and Maria—function as the source of a collective history. That some of these primary sources of history are strong-willed women *qua* mother-figures creates a symbolic narrative matriarchy, one imbuing knowledge through an oral tradition. Rosa and Drusilla share with Bayard news of his father and other key events, while Pilar shares with Jordan, Maria, and others her experiences with Pablo's brutality toward fascists and with Finito de Palencia, a former lover. Faulkner often has Bayard consider the importance of his father's and cousin's storytelling as, in some ways, he witnesses the creation of a history that *The Unvanquished* reconstructs. On his

59. Reynolds, *Hemingway's Reading*, 123; Brasch and Sigman, 119–20.

60. Hemingway, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, 233.

part, Hemingway adopted a strategy Faulkner had used by including the women's storytelling and narration in a history-rich text. As was extended stream of consciousness, using more than one narratorial voice was atypical for Hemingway—he perhaps found more merit in Faulkner's work than he admitted, or perhaps thought he could choralize narrative better than Faulkner could.

Faulkner's and Hemingway's focus on oral narration also follows a patriarchal lineage. Bayard learns much from his father early in *The Unvanquished*, and Jordan remembers his grandfather recounting his life before and after the Civil War. With family central to each text, Faulkner chronicles the extended Sartoris family's wartime experiences; Hemingway has Jordan invoke his grandfather and father when musing upon, respectively, the presence and absence of courage. (Jordan's father, like Clarence Hemingway, was a suicide.) This familial element takes on added significance in Hemingway's case, as storytelling enables unrelated characters to form a symbolic family, as in this conversation:

"That is as a brother," Maria said to him. "I kiss thee as a brother."

The boy shook his head, crying without making any noise.

"I am thy sister," Maria said. "And I love thee and thou hast a family. We are all thy family."

"Including the *Inglés*," boomed Pilar. "Isn't it true, *Inglés*?"

"Yes," Robert Jordan said to the boy, "we are all thy family, Joaquín."<sup>61</sup>

Joaquín's storytelling fosters his bond with his fellow countrywomen and the American Jordan. Faulkner's families—Compsons, Sartorises, even Sutpens—bond through storytelling and a collective past, though of course not without tension and conflict. He seems to have guided Hemingway in this direction, since little of Hemingway's prior work depicted such a strong familial element. In contrast, Hemingway's ruggedly individualistic characters—Jake Barnes, Frederic Henry, Harry Morgan, the expatriates of such stories as "Homage to Switzerland" and "A Canary for One"—did not have the strong family element seen in Faulkner's family-centric texts, as Earl Rovit has noted.<sup>62</sup>

Retelling, wrestling with, and understanding the past—be it personal or national—is integral to each book: it solidifies the Sartoris–Millard–Hawk contingent in *The Unvanquished* and creates a figurative family in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Bayard and Jordan can claim an ancestral connection

61. Ibid., 139.

62. Rovit, "The Hemingway–Faulkner Generation."

to war generally and to the American Civil War in particular. For Bayard, his father, Colonel John Sartoris, is a noteworthy leader of an irregular Southern cavalry, as was the case with Faulkner's great-grandfather, William Clark Falkner. Bayard's grandmother and cousin also take on pivotal roles in the text as, respectively, noncombatant and combatant: Rosa takes back captured animals and personal property from Federal troops, while Drusilla eventually rides with the Colonel's cavalry. This anticipates the portrayal of women in war seen through Maria in Hemingway's novel and, later, Faulkner's *Requiem for a Nun* and *The Mansion*. Jordan has a similar familial connection to the American Civil War, because his grandfather was a Union cavalryman, as was the case with Hemingway's grandfather, Anson Hemingway. Jordan embodies the courage and combat bravado with which he associates his grandfather; he recognizes his grandfather's important role in American history, and he in turn tries to play a comparably important role in Spanish history.

That the authors wrote about a war important to their ancestry and nationality contextualizes their texts in the schema of American history. Within these contextualized narratives, the authors interconnect the experience of war and the telling of history, which squares with Bayard's stance on "war-telling": "Because wars are wars: the same exploding powder where there was powder, the same thrust and parry of iron when there was not—one tale, one telling, the same as the next or the one before."<sup>63</sup> As one sees in *Sartoris* or *Absalom, Absalom!*, storytelling and war are interdependent for Faulkner; wars are undergone, shared, remembered, and relived through memories and tales. Narrating several episodes of his youth, Bayard realizes that his "war-telling" unifies him with his fellow Southerners and helps him understand a personal and national history. Jordan comes to a similar conclusion after hearing Joaquín recount how his parents, sister, and brother-in-law were killed by Fascists in Valladolid:

How many times had he heard this? How many times had he watched people say it with difficulty? How many times had he seen their eyes fill and their throats harden with the difficulty of saying my father, or my brother, or my mother, or my sister? He could not remember how many times he had heard them mention the dead in this way. Nearly always they spoke as this boy did now; suddenly and apropos of the mention of the town and always you said, "What barbarians."

"You only heard the statement of the loss," he concludes.<sup>64</sup> "The novel," Scott

63. Faulkner, *The Unvanquished*, 383.

64. Hemingway, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, 134.

Donaldson has recently argued, “makes it clear that during the Spanish Civil War both sides were engaged in wholesale lying and a great deal of false rhetoric.”<sup>65</sup> Having heard numerous stories of the Fascists’ and Loyalists’ atrocities, Jordan imagines all such stories blurring into a single story of corruption and “loss”—in the same way that Bayard sees war stories as “one tale, one telling” of loss, betrayal, and heroism. Faulkner both “romanticized the adventures of Bayard and Ringo” and criticized “pretensions to gentility in the ante-bellum mode” in the text. “[M]ore and more he emerged as a profound critic of the South, and particularly of the strict roles it prescribed as to sex, race, and class.”<sup>66</sup> Because each book almost equally foregrounds stories and their tellings, past juxtaposed with war-ravaged present fills out the picture of the civil wars’ characters, contexts, and politics. Seemingly following Faulkner’s lead, Hemingway layers past and present in a novel that is at times more Faulknerian than anything he had written—or would write.

Through their exposure to shared stories and memories, Bayard and Jordan personally connect with events of vast historical significance, showing the authors intertwining past and present in ways typical of Faulkner but less so of Hemingway. Gaining equal control over the narrative, Drusilla tells stories from a firsthand perspective in “Raid.” As Bayard arrives at Hawkhurst, he, Ringo, and Rosa hear stories about the death of Drusilla’s fiancé at Shiloh, the exodus of slaves trying to cross the Mississippi River, and the destruction of the railroad adjacent to Hawkhurst. Drusilla’s mother and brother supply information piecemeal, but Drusilla soon assumes the historian’s role, chiefly regarding a train stolen by Confederate irregular forces prior to the destruction of the train tracks:

We saw it, we were there, as if Drusilla’s voice had transported us to the wandering light-ray of space in which was still held the furious shadow—the brief section of track which existed inside the scope of a single pair of eyes and nowhere else, coming from nowhere and having, needing, no destination, the engine not coming into view but arrested in human sight in thunderous yet dreamy fury, lonely, inviolate and forlorn, wailing through its whistle precious steam [ . . . ] the flaring and streaming smoke stack, the tossing bell, the starred Saint Andrew’s cross nailed to the cab roof, the wheels and the flashing driving rods on which the brass fittings glinted like the golden spurs themselves—then gone, vanished. Only not gone or vanished either, so long as there should be defeated or the descendants of defeated to tell it or listen to the telling.<sup>67</sup>

65. Donaldson, *Fitzgerald and Hemingway*, 447.

66. Williamson, 244.

67. Faulkner, *The Unvanquished*, 385–86.

One of “the descendants of defeated,” Bayard describes this train as if it were his “single pair of eyes” that watched it pass and noted its “brass fittings” and “flaring and steaming smoke stack,” not Drusilla’s. Such details are crucial to Drusilla’s “telling” and to the ways in which she—and by extension Faulkner—juxtaposes family, narrative, and historicity.

As Drusilla assumes her role as a feminine source of history, so Colonel Sartoris and Rosa Millard, collectively, serve a similar function in “Ambuscade.” Bayard recalls that he and Ringo would eavesdrop on the Colonel’s conversations with Rosa. Thinking about his father and grandmother as repositories of history, Bayard retells parts of various stories that he and Ringo heard. “Then we listened”:

We heard: the names—Forrest and Morgan and Barksdale and Van Dorn; the words like Gap and Run which we didn’t have in Mississippi even though we did own Barksdale, and Van Dorn until somebody’s husband killed him, and one day General Forrest rode down South Street in Oxford where there watched him through a window pane a young girl who scratched her name on it with a diamond ring: Celia Cook.

But we were just twelve; we didn’t listen to that. What Ringo and I heard was the cannon and the flags and the anonymous yelling. That’s what we intended to hear tonight.<sup>68</sup>

As was also the case with the sensory details of Drusilla’s stories, Bayard reexperiences the events that his father describes. Such major Confederates as Nathan Bedford Forrest and John Hunt Morgan, as well as the Oxford legend about Celia Cook eventually marrying Forrest, are a part of the Colonel’s storytelling because he too is a key Confederate.<sup>69</sup> As is perhaps typical of their age and gender, Bayard and Ringo only want to hear about fighting and combat heroics, not tales of love in war. The boys do not just hear the tale but “the cannon and the flags and the anonymous yelling” as well, as if they are not adolescent hearers but members of the Colonel’s cavalry, perhaps as Faulkner and Hemingway themselves imagined as they heard similar Civil War stories from their grandfathers while growing into manhood.

Building on Faulkner’s association of storytelling and clear imagery and his own Imagistic principles, Hemingway underscores Pilar’s ability to immerse her listeners in her tales. After hearing Pilar retell how Pablo’s guerrillas publicly massacred Fascists, Jordan comments on Pilar’s detailed storytelling. “Pilar had made him see it in that town,” he thinks:

68. *Ibid.*, 329.

69. Hinkle and McCoy, 34.

If that woman could only write. He would try to write it and if he had luck and could remember it perhaps he could get it down as she told it. God, how she could tell a story. [ . . . ] I wish I could write well enough to write that story, he thought. What we did. Not what the others did to us. He knew enough about that. He knew plenty about that behind the lines. But you had to have known the people before. You had to know what they had been in the village.

[ . . . . ]

But you were always gone when it happened. The *partizans* did their damage and pulled out. The peasants stayed and took the punishment. I've always known about the other, he thought. What we did to them at the start. I've always known it and I have heard it mentioned shamelessly and shamefully, bragged of, boasted of, defended, explained and denied. But that damned woman made me see it as though I had been there.<sup>70</sup>

Although Jordan lacks Pilar's firsthand memory, he understands this massacre as if from personal experience. Jordan knows the details of this event—bloodied bodies, drunken behavior, the dying words of the Fascists before they are thrown off a cliff—because of the sensory and emotional clarity of Pilar's story. Pilar “made him see it” through her narration because she is the voice of experience who has seen similar instances of Pablo's and the Fascists' cruelty. While not the narrator or protagonist, Pilar is the novel's primary historian and voice of authority. She conveys to Jordan and the others an understanding of the recent past, a role similar to that portrayed by Faulkner two years earlier with Drusilla. Faulkner's use of storytelling marked some of Hemingway's novel, seen through the latter's infusing a text with so much secondary narration. Hemingway includes several stories in Pilar's voice to amplify her importance as a primary source of history, granting her narrative language and agency. Faulkner does the same, effectively integrating Drusilla's voice with Bayard's retrospection. Though neither woman is the narrator as such, their narrative voices are heard in tandem with the primary narrators. Such implicit “fascination and strong identification with the empowered feminine”—such as Rosa and Pilar as matriarchs, or Drusilla's and Maria's occasionally androgynous appearances—in these texts counterbalanced some of the dominant “masculinist misogyny” of the modernist era and the authors' own lives.<sup>71</sup> Faulkner had done something similar with Dilsey in *The Sound and the Fury*, Rosa Coldfield in *Absalom, Absalom!*, and

70. Hemingway, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, 134–35.

71. DeKoven, 174.

Cora Tull and Addie Bundren in *As I Lay Dying*, but Hemingway expanded his literary vision by giving a woman more narrative space than he had before.

In their own ways, both texts depict a sense of courage in their characters and narrative figures. Hemingway does not conclude the novel with Jordan's death; our last image is of the wounded Jordan courageously waiting for the Fascist Lieutenant Berrendo to come within range of his submachine gun. Faulkner depicts a similar stoical purposefulness in his characters—Drusilla stands up to Union cavalry to save her horse from being stolen, and Rosa confronts Union officers and swindles them out of hundreds of mules and horses, to name only two situations of key characters exemplifying bravery in the face of a more numerous and ultimately victorious foe. For Donaldson, Hemingway's novel is an "idealistic portrayal of those who were willing to sacrifice everything, their lives included, for the battle against fascism"; one might say something similar about the sense of purpose and pride in *The Unvanquished*.<sup>72</sup>

Ultimately, the parallelism between *The Unvanquished* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* shows a dynamic of psychological influence between Faulkner and Hemingway. Their fusion of storytelling and war suggests a complementary perspective on the relationship between war and writing. Intragenerationally, their civil war texts parallel each other and, due to Faulkner's partial influence on Hemingway's novel, embody an exchange and correspondence. Further demonstrating such (conscious?) correspondence, the texts incorporate comparable imagery. As is the case in virtually all of Faulkner's and Hemingway's fiction, nature is crucial, as numerous characters revere the landscape of their civil war. Faulkner's text opens with an image unifying humans, nature, and the Civil War. Bayard and Ringo play with what Bayard calls their "living map" of Vicksburg: piles of wood chips that stand for the city, which was under siege until July 4, 1863, when the story opens.<sup>73</sup> The boys, too young to fight, become imaginative players in history through the soil and their game, in which they take turns pretending to be Ulysses S. Grant and John Pemberton. Later, in "Retreat," both Bayard and Ringo discuss the former's taking symbolically rich soil from the Sartoris plantation: "it was more than Sartoris earth; it was Vicksburg too: the yelling was in it, the embattled, the iron-worn, the supremely invincible."<sup>74</sup>

Hemingway similarly layers landscape, characters, and the historical significance of a civil war. The novel's opening and closing images are identical: Jordan lying on his stomach on the forest's pine-needled floor and thinking

72. Donaldson, *Fitzgerald and Hemingway*, 450–51.

73. Faulkner, *The Unvanquished*, 321.

74. *Ibid.*, 356.



about the war effort. What differentiates these images is Jordan's health; at novel's end, he is badly injured, prone on the forest floor and waiting for Fascist troops. He symbolically communes with the natural world through physical contact, analogous to Bayard and Ringo in this sense:

Robert Jordan saw them there on the slope, close to him now, and below he saw the road and the bridge and the long lines of vehicles below it. He was completely integrated now and he took a good long look at everything. Then he looked up at the sky. There were big white clouds in it. He touched the palm of his hand against the pine needles where he lay and he touched the bark of the pine trunk that he lay behind.

[ . . . . ]

Robert Jordan lay behind the tree, holding onto himself very carefully and delicately to keep his hands steady. He was waiting until the officer reached the sunlit place where the first trees of the pine forest joined the green slope of the meadow. He could feel his heart beating against the pine needle floor of the forest.<sup>75</sup>

Not unlike Nick Adams in "Big Two-Hearted River," Jordan bonds physically with the natural world. He touches the forest floor and tree to steady himself before opening fire, and his heart figuratively touches the ground, both "completely integrat[ing]" him with nature. The pine-needled forest floor is, literally and symbolically, the foundation of the novel's primary action: it is on this ground where Jordan and Maria make love and where the climactic battle takes place; our first and last view of Jordan is of him prone on the ground; and, many of Jordan's fellow guerillas frequently profess their love for "the Spanish earth," to borrow the title of the 1937 film Hemingway narrated and helped fund.

In addition to common usage of nature as a symbol, Faulkner and Hemingway offer a complementary image of a displayed corpse. At the end of "Vendée," Bayard and Ringo return to Jefferson after killing Grumby, Rosa Millard's murderer. Having attached his dead body to the door of a cotton compress, they nail his right hand to the wooden marker of Rosa's grave as proof of his death and their courage. Bayard acts the Sartoris role by courageously avenging his grandmother's murder; as Buck McCaslin proudly announces, "'Ain't I told you he is John Sartoris' boy? Hey? Ain't I told you?'"<sup>76</sup> This "boy" was, in a sense, now a Sartoris man capable of evincing familial honor and historicizing the family's wartime experiences.

75. Hemingway, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, 471.

76. Faulkner, *The Unvanquished*, 445.

A variation on this image resurfaces toward the beginning of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, when Anselmo tells Jordan about how he killed a bear and nailed its paw to a church door. Though the appendage here is a bear paw and not a human hand, the parallel imagery is nonetheless telling. As Jordan and Anselmo discuss hunting both animals and human enemies—Jordan disdains killing the former, Anselmo the latter—Anselmo describes the wolf hides, ibex horns, and a stuffed eagle in his home, before recalling a bear that he killed:

“On the door of the church of my village was nailed the paw of a bear that I killed in the spring, finding him on a hillside in the snow, overturning a log with this same paw.”

“When was this?”

“Six years ago. And every time I saw that paw, like the hand of a man, but with those long claws, dried and nailed through the palm to the door of the church, I received a pleasure.”

[ . . . ]

“So is the chest of a man like the chest of a bear,” Robert Jordan said. “With the hide removed from the bear, there are many similarities in the muscles.”<sup>77</sup>

Two men discuss the similarities between human and ursine body structure and, in the process, partly echo Faulkner’s image of a severed hand. The appendages are nailed to a piece of wood on public display, elicit a degree of “pleasure,” and come from a body that was hunted down and killed by a major character. As John Howell observes, “given the parallel contexts (church door and wooden cross) and the identical images (‘dried’ and ‘nailed’ paws), it seems inescapable that Faulkner associated Hemingway’s theme of brotherhood with what was, in essence, Faulkner’s own image.”<sup>78</sup> Howell has also noted a correlation between *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and Faulkner’s early version of *The Bear*, then titled “Lion.” In the Faulkner story, the dried paw of Old Ben is nailed to the grave of Sam Fathers, Indian guide and hunting mentor to Isaac McCaslin. Howell does not discuss this similarity between *The Unvanquished* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, but his reading of this common imagery speaks to the authors’ larger patterns of exchange, influence, and one-upmanship. The (un)conscious trading of this image continued two years after *For Whom the Bell Tolls* in the final version of *The Bear* in *Go Down, Moses*, in which the paw of Old Ben is buried

77. Hemingway, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, 39–40.

78. Howell, “Hemingway, Faulkner, and ‘The Bear,’” 120.

in Sam Fathers's grave. The extended linkage between *The Unvanquished*, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, and *The Bear* echoes the "exchange between rivals" Peter Hays notes in *The Bear* and *The Old Man and the Sea*, or the possible impact of Hemingway's "Ten Indians" on *The Sound and the Fury* that Steven Carter has examined.<sup>79</sup>

While this hand-paw image is one of several correspondences between *The Unvanquished* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Hemingway was not making a direct reference to Faulkner, as his letter to Dos Passos on June 26, 1931, reveals. As he wrote after traveling through Spain, "Barco de Avila is wonderful town—Killed a wolf there while we were there—Bear paw nailed to door of church."<sup>80</sup> Hemingway's hunting experiences prefaced Anselmo's—both killed a wolf and saw a severed bear paw nailed to a church door. The parallel imagery between the civil war texts, however, still resonates. Reading them in conjunction, one cannot help noting a strong connection at the level of imagery and of characterization. Hemingway was probably familiar with *The Unvanquished*—it was at Finca Vigia when he started *For Whom the Bell Tolls* in February 1939, and some of its stories had been published in *The Saturday Evening Post*.<sup>81</sup> The authors were moved by and then utilized a similar image in books about different wars, one of several artistic commonalities that, on occasion, offset their growing professional resentment of each other.

Generally, the importance of knowing and remembering history pervades each book. Bayard sees the Civil War and Reconstruction as integral elements of his personal history in which he learned about courage, heroism, gender roles, and death, whereas Jordan understands his own involvement in the Spanish Civil War in part because of the example set by his grandfather in the American Civil War. Pilar, the voice of experience, disseminates her knowledge of the past to her fellow Loyalists to illuminate their roles as well as the barbarity of which both their enemies and allies are capable. Neither *The Unvanquished* nor *For Whom the Bell Tolls* are about their particular civil wars as such. Both draw upon the past as a means of comprehending a war-torn present—each text is more historiographical than historical, in the sense that both focus on how the past is remembered and retold. Such an awareness of history reveals how Faulkner's and Hemingway's civil wars became "one tale, one telling" in which "You only heard the statement of the loss"—these two books can be read (and even taught) as companion pieces on the fictional representation of civil war. Psychologically, each man was often driven to eclipse the other, more intensely so in Hemingway's case as Faulkner's literary

79. Hays, "Exchange between Rivals," *passim*; Nagel, *Hemingway: The Writer in Context*, *passim*; Carter, *passim*.

80. Hemingway, *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters*, 342.

81. Reynolds, *Hemingway: The 1930s*, 312; Williamson, 256.

prominence expanded more quickly than his own. Writing to Faulkner in July 1947, Hemingway said that he pushed himself to take artistic risks in the novel and even suggested that Faulkner read it. Faulkner may not have owned *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, but he praised aspects of its risk-taking and characterization in the 1950s, particularly in *Requiem for a Nun* and *The Mansion*.<sup>82</sup> If expanding his work and risk-taking meant writing like Faulkner, and if Hemingway wanted to prevail, then he would sometimes have to aspire to different standards, although doing so made his Spanish Civil War novel resemble his competitor's work. In this way, they unintentionally bolstered their artistic relationship by adapting each other's techniques and ideas, in this case about civil war, history, narrative, and storytelling.

Faulkner was not in Madrid with his mistress while that city was routinely shelled, and he did not see myriad young Spaniards die in combat. Hemingway did not grow up in a society that was recounting a war that it officially lost in April 1865, nor was his great-grandfather a legendary Mississippi figure who had designed his own statue (of himself) in Ripley, Mississippi. The war of the 1860s was tightly woven into the fabric of Yoknapatawpha County, while another internecine war was a source for several of Hemingway's fictional and nonfictional projects, and for his short-lived Leftist leanings. Their corresponding fictional representations of these two wars indicate a mutual competitive consciousness during, before, and after the 1930s. However, this intense consciousness could—and, oftener, did—become judgmental, such as when Faulkner answered Hemingway's criticisms of him in *Death in the Afternoon*, while offering some of his own in response.

### THE WILD PALMS: TEXT, INTERTEXT, CONTEXT

*The Wild Palms* (1939) is integral to the Faulkner–Hemingway relationship as Faulkner's conscious reshaping of Hemingway. While the text's two stories are superficially distinct, it reveals influence, exchange, mutual adaptation, and criticism. Hemingway's references to Faulkner, especially *Death in the Afternoon*, were more explicitly critical, but Faulkner's treatment of Hemingway here is more subtly critical. This riposte to *Death in the Afternoon* and to Hemingway as *Hemingway* is a humorous, nuanced, and mildly mean-spirited treatment. Analyzing the text reveals, as H. R. Stoneback has noted, “just how extensive and intensive Faulkner's dialogue with Hemingway is.”<sup>83</sup>

82. Blotner, *William Faulkner's Library*, 36.

83. Stoneback, “The Poisoned Spring and the Yellow Flood,” 7.

*The Wild Palms* sets two stories ten years apart and tells them in alternating chapters—"The Wild Palms" (set in 1937–1938) and "Old Man" (set in 1927, when the Mississippi River flooded, hence the title's reference to the river). The two stories are unrelated, at least directly. "The Wild Palms" tells of the doomed love affair of Harry Wilbourne and Charlotte Rittenmeyer, and "Old Man" tells of the unnamed "tall convict" of Mississippi's Parchman prison farm: while on a chain gang, he gets caught in the flood, rescues a pregnant woman, and makes his way back to the levee where he and his fellow prisoners were sent to work. Each story has a clear real-life referent: Faulkner constructed his own version of Hemingway's prose style, themes, diction, and characters, similar to what he would do in the 1940s with the screenplay of *To Have and Have Not*. "The Wild Palms" borrows from Hemingway stylistically and thematically—namely, *The Sun Also Rises*, *A Farewell to Arms*, "Hills Like White Elephants," and "The Snows of Kilimanjaro"—to create an implicit "parody of Hemingway."<sup>84</sup> In "The Wild Palms," Faulkner adapts Hemingway-esque elements to tell his own story, adopt his signature narrative interiority, and satirize his coeval. Contrastingly, "Old Man" is more typically Faulknerian in primary location (Mississippi, though not Yoknapatawpha County) and style. Symbolizing Hemingway and Faulkner, respectively, "The Wild Palms" and "Old Man" crisscross the two writers, suggesting a dialogue by Faulkner with Hemingway in which elements of both men's fiction compete—arguably to Faulkner's advantage.

Although this pair of stories is separated in the text, Faulkner wanted them to be read together, as he said in an interview with the *Paris Review*'s Jean Stein in 1956:

When I reached the end of what is now the first section of *The Wild Palms*, I realized suddenly that something was missing, it needed emphasis, something to lift it like counterpoint in music. So I wrote on the "Old Man" story until "The Wild Palms" story rose back to pitch. Then I stopped the "Old Man" story at what is now its first section, and took up "The Wild Palms" story until it began again to sag. Then I raised it to pitch again with another section of its antithesis, which is the story of a man who got his love and spent the rest of the book fleeing from it, even to the extent of voluntarily going back to jail where he would be safe. They are only two stories by chance, perhaps necessity. The story is that of Charlotte and Wilbourne.<sup>85</sup>

84. Watson, 229n79. See also Thomas McHaney's *William Faulkner's The Wild Palms* (Chapter 1, *passim*), and Cleanth Brooks, *William Faulkner: Toward Yoknapatawpha and Beyond* (407–9), for a synopsis of the Hemingway allusions in each story. I will build on McHaney's and Brooks's very thorough analyses in this section.

85. Stein, 133.

A year later, at the University of Virginia, Faulkner elaborated on this plan. Wanting to achieve a “contrapuntal quality like music,” he structured the two contrasting stories alternately, with “The Wild Palms” as the “theme” and “Old Man” the “counterpoint,” in which both stories form a whole as multiple musical themes can comprise a polyphonic whole.<sup>86</sup> Although the two stories take place ten years apart and have no shared characters, they counterbalance: both center on a man and a woman on tense, emotional quests before being separated in the end. Each couple has what its counterpart desires: Harry and Charlotte seek the freedom and mobility that the convict and his pregnant companion have, while the convict wants to return the woman and state-owned skiff which he was given and then to go back to the structured world of Parchman. The text’s “two stories are enhanced by their juxtaposition,”<sup>87</sup> in that the (melo)drama of “The Wild Palms” is most pronounced when one considers that “Old Man” depicts a virtually opposite couple. Harry’s desire for freedom starkly contrasts the convict’s ultimate choice for imprisonment.

The text, for Thomas McHaney, also triangulates Faulkner, Hemingway, and Sherwood Anderson. Faulkner clearly had both his mentor and his fellow Anderson protégé in mind, peppering the stories with references to Anderson (*Dark Laughter* and Tennessee Mitchell Anderson) and Hemingway that give his book extratextual significance:

[T]he novels have in common runaway lovers, the theme of a world antagonistic to love, similar use of escapes by water, and, *Mosquitoes* excluded, apparent allusions to Twain and *Huckleberry Finn*. A minor connection is the similar use of recurring symbolic devices for atmosphere: Anderson’s dark laughter, the mosquitoes which harry the lovers in the earlier Faulkner novel, the rain of *A Farewell to Arms*, and the rustling wild palm leaves.<sup>88</sup>

Nearly thirteen years after he chided his mentor in *Sherwood Anderson and Other Famous Creoles* and *Mosquitoes*, Faulkner again adapted Andersonian themes in his fiction, but respectfully. Absent here are the caricatures (Dawson Fairchild of *Mosquitoes*) and patronizing assessments. Instead, *The Wild Palms* portrays elements of Anderson’s personal life more seriously: for instance, Tennessee Mitchell Anderson can be said to have prefigured Charlotte, and Anderson and Tennessee vacationed in a cabin remarkably

86. Gwynn and Blotner, 171.

87. Minter, 173.

88. McHaney, 13.

similar to Charlotte and Harry's lakeside Wisconsin cabin.<sup>89</sup> Faulkner seemingly turned away from humbling Anderson to underscore his own artistic value. Instead, he used Hemingway to do so.

Faulkner likely coupled the numerous references to Anderson and Hemingway because he associated them so closely. One helped him get published and directed his artistic attention southward, while the other was a fellow Anderson mentee and his most important contemporary. We can build from McHaney and read the text as a byproduct of Faulkner's associations with Anderson and as a way for him to continue sparring textually, symbolically, and competitively with Hemingway. The "veiled self-representation" Watson locates in *Absalom, Absalom!*, furthermore, is also in *The Wild Palms*, which is markedly "palimpsestic" in its layered portrayals of Faulkner's tense romances (Estelle, Helen Baird, Meta Carpenter), relationships with Anderson and Hemingway, literary past and present, and context of popular, sensationalized books and periodicals.<sup>90</sup>

"[A] novel about extremes,"<sup>91</sup> *The Wild Palms* shows Faulkner riffing on and reshaping themes about which Hemingway had written: a doomed, ill-fated love affair; an abortion couched in euphemistic terms; a marriage complicated by drinking and financial concerns; a love of bullfighting. Such thematic manipulations illustrate a conflicted sense of admiration, one-upmanship, and awareness of Hemingway's celebrity and literary example. "Faulkner is responding," Stoneback adds, "to the entire Hemingway canon and the mythic persona of the man" whose sales and broader popularity outshined his own.<sup>92</sup> In *The Wild Palms*, Faulkner refits well-known Hemingway texts to effectively rewrite him, to take his work out of Europe and into a symbolic Mississippi. He again follows the kind of artistic reiving that informed his literary style and methods. "Something reived by a literary artist, then, would be material that the reiver saw used to less than ideal purposes, or which the reiver had a mind to put to better use," as in the adaptations texturing *The Wild Palms*, his Nobel Prize address, and *To Have and Have Not* screenplay.<sup>93</sup> Instead of passively imitating or echoing his rival's work, Faulkner rewrote, reshaped, and possibly improved integral parts of the Hemingway canon.

The novel's key story (according to Faulkner's later accounts), "The Wild Palms" teems with allusions to Hemingway's fiction and their shared socio-

89. Ibid., 11–12.

90. Watson, 152, 161–62; cf., Earle, 194ff.

91. Earle, 204.

92. Stoneback, "The Poisoned Spring and the Yellow Flood," 8.

93. Uργο, 8.



artistic context. The text's opening anticipates the kind of doubling seen throughout between characters, themes, and authorial counterparts. Harry and Charlotte counterpoint their neighboring landlords, the doctor and his wife—an echo of the 1925 Hemingway story, “The Doctor and the Doctor’s Wife,” perhaps—vis-à-vis their relationships: both are childless but for different reasons, the latter couple’s “stale bed” contrasts what we will see of the former’s sexual activity,<sup>94</sup> and the couples represent inverse wealth, financial stability, and marital statuses. This possible reference to the title of a Hemingway story can spark a more definitive reading of the wealth of allusions in “The Wild Palms” section, foremost of which were to Hemingway’s bestselling novel to date.

As he would do in his Nobel Prize address eleven years later, Faulkner borrowed from *A Farewell to Arms*: resemblances between Frederic and Harry, the similar deaths of Catherine and Charlotte, a policeman’s question about sexual activity in hospitals, and the broader association of love and struggle. The relationships depicted in these texts were rooted in the authors’ postwar lives. Hemingway—as has been well documented by Scott Donaldson, James Nagel, Bernice Kert, and Michael Reynolds—was exorcising the pain of his war experiences and of being rejected by Agnes Von Kurowsky in *A Farewell to Arms* and other texts of the 1920s. On his part, Faulkner had at least three women in mind when writing “The Wild Palms”: Estelle, Helen Baird (the object of his unrequited love in the early 1920s), and Meta Carpenter (his first mistress). Poignantly unifying his experiences with these women, Faulkner set the story’s tragic climax in Pascagoula, Mississippi, which he often visited and associated with Estelle and Helen. The town where Charlotte dies is the same place where Faulkner visited both Phil Stone’s and Helen’s families in the early 1920s, and where he and Estelle honeymooned in June–July 1929. As a young man, Faulkner proposed to Helen in the summer of 1925; she refused and later married Guy Lyman on March 4, 1927, the year of “Old Man.” Pascagoula continued to be a bitter-sweet place for Faulkner after he married Estelle. During their honeymoon, a drunken Estelle waded far out into the ocean, an apparent suicide attempt, but she was soon rescued by a neighbor.<sup>95</sup> That *A Farewell to Arms* and “The Wild Palms” are set in places—Italy, coastal Mississippi—of painful personal association, and that each sets the woman’s death in such a psychologically loaded place, suggests only the first of numerous connections between them.

Beyond such autobiographical roots, both relationships are described

94. Faulkner, *The Wild Palms*, 501.

95. Blotner, *Faulkner*, 148–51, 244–45; Karl, 238–39, 357.



financially,<sup>96</sup> and references to money and being able to afford things pervade “The Wild Palms,” many evincing Harry’s financial anxieties. In a way, Frederic, Harry, and Charlotte view their experiences through a financial lens. As Catherine is dying on the operating table, Frederic thinks, “And this was the price you paid for sleeping together. This was the end of the trap. This was what people got for loving each other.”<sup>97</sup> While with Harry in their New Orleans hotel room, Charlotte says, “the second time I ever saw you I learned what I had read in books but I never had actually believed: that love and suffering are the same thing and that the value of love is the sum of what you have to pay for it and anytime you get it cheap you have cheated yourself.”<sup>98</sup> Putting aspects of Hemingway’s novel to the kind of “better use” Urgo has discussed, Faulkner recasts thoughts from the end of Frederic and Catherine’s relationship into dialogue at the beginning of Harry and Charlotte’s relationship. This dialogue is a key borrowed part of a novel that “is at once parody and homage” but creates a “literary kinship” between Faulkner and Hemingway.<sup>99</sup>

Captured by this financial framing of the Harry–Charlotte relationship is the significance of Harry’s fledgling career as a writer of popular, somewhat sensational novels. His quest for popularity within the more literary *The Wild Palms*, at some level, echoes how both Faulkner and Hemingway themselves tried to negotiate their “popular acceptance” with their (preferred?) “avant-garde identity.”<sup>100</sup> In “The Wild Palms” section, Faulkner “uses [ . . . ] pulp magazines and the act of writing for them as symbols for the degraded side of professional writing.”<sup>101</sup> Both stories of *The Wild Palms* refer to the industry of popular writing: while living in Chicago, Harry writes such stories solely for money; on his part, the tall convict cites this type of work as inspiration for the attempted train robbery that initially sent him to Parchman in 1921. Likely rooted in Faulkner’s inner conflict between popular (read financial) appeal and literary merit, references to such “paper novels” in *The Wild Palms* are largely negative.<sup>102</sup> To the convict’s mind, such sensationalized works “had led him into his present predicament through their own ignorance and gullibility regarding the medium in which they dealt and took money for.” He then remembers: “he had followed his printed (and false) authority to the letter; he had saved the paper-backs for two

96. McHaney, 14.

97. Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms*, 320.

98. Faulkner, *The Wild Palms*, 526.

99. Broncano, 106.

100. Earle, 194.

101. *Ibid.*, 206.

102. Faulkner, *The Wild Palms*, 509.

years, reading and rereading them, memorising [*sic*] them, comparing and weighing story and method against story and method, taking the good from each and discarding the dross as his workable plan emerged.”<sup>103</sup> That the tall convict has read these works a little too faithfully shows Faulkner examining such works from the perspective of the reader, drawing attention to the lived effects of such extremities of masculinity, adventure, and violence.

Consistent with the contrapuntal structure of *The Wild Palms*, Harry’s involvement with popular dime novels is as an author—though not of the ones the tall convict read, since Harry writes his in late 1937. Reading such works a little more shrewdly than the tall convict had, Charlotte earlier compares their tense relationship to “what I had read in books” about romance, anticipating the other side of a reader-text relationship that Harry embodies.<sup>104</sup> Having returned to Chicago with Charlotte for financial reasons after an idyllic retreat in Wisconsin, Harry begins writing somewhat lurid stories for “confession magazines,” often adopting the perspective of a troubled, sexually active woman. Unlike the sculptures and figurines Charlotte crafts and sells during their earlier stay in Chicago, Harry’s stories evince little more than financial necessity: these were “stories which he wrote complete from the first capital to the last period in one sustained frenzied agonising rush,” also described as “his latest primer-bald moronic fable, his sexual gumdrop,” none of which give him any sort of creative pride.<sup>105</sup>

Troubled by “the anesthesia of his monotonous inventing”—perhaps of such opening lines as “At sixteen I was an unwed mother”—Harry later observes to McCord: “I had tied myself hand and foot in a little strip of inked ribbon, daily I watched myself getting more and more tangled in it like a roach in a spider web.”<sup>106</sup> Despite the financial gain sparked by such stories “on the theme of female sex troubles,” Harry sees his popular writing work as a form of mental and moral servitude with the means of his creativity and mobility symbolically tethered to the typewriter ribbon.<sup>107</sup> Harry’s concern echoes Faulkner’s anxiety about writing “trash” instead of avant-garde art, expressed in the August 1934 letter to Morton Goldman discussed above. A little earlier, Hemingway was trying to balance his artistic and financial responsibilities. “More and more,” Trogdon observes, “the man of business’s affairs began intruding on those of the man of letters,” seen for instance in the rewriting, censorship, and five-figure advance related to serializing *A Farewell to Arms* in 1929.<sup>108</sup>

103. *Ibid.*, 509–10.

104. *Ibid.*, 526.

105. *Ibid.*, 577–78.

106. *Ibid.*, 578, 586.

107. *Ibid.*, 587.

108. Trogdon, 61.

The intratextual presence of popular fiction in “The Wild Palms,” as well as the contextual literary-popular dialectic in Hemingway’s and Faulkner’s careers, speaks to “the more general relationships the authors had with their artistic reputations and their popular audience,” relationships that were both fictional and autobiographical.<sup>109</sup> Hemingway’s celebrity, his stories in *Esquire* and other mainstream periodicals, Faulkner’s screenwriting work in the early 1930s, and the sensation surrounding *Sanctuary* had all established the literary-popular context for *The Wild Palms*. The text, as McHaney, Blotner, and others have shown, works by contradistinction, whether of characters, styles and themes, avant-garde and popular forms, Faulkner’s artistic self-confidence and financial anxiety, or Faulkner and Hemingway themselves.

Perhaps such “sensationalism” in and around the novel, Earle posits, represents “a space of popular leveling of the high/low extremes.”<sup>110</sup> Similar “extremes” also texture the romantic relationships in *A Farewell to Arms* and “The Wild Palms.” Throughout Faulkner’s story, Harry and Charlotte (who is married to another man, Francis) travel from New Orleans to Chicago, Wisconsin, Utah, Texas, and, finally, Pascagoula seeking romantic freedom and financial stability throughout 1937–1938. This intense movement, as well as Harry and Charlotte’s movement from conflict to greater conflict, mimics Frederic and Catherine’s doomed relationship and their travels together throughout Italy and Switzerland. Both couples are unsettled geographically and emotionally, and both experience intense passion, even more intense struggle to escape from conflict, and the death of the woman in the context of pregnancy.

Each woman meets a remarkably similar fate: Catherine dies in childbirth from excessive hemorrhaging; Charlotte dies from hemorrhaging as well, though from Harry’s failed abortion attempt. Catherine and Charlotte both exclaim “don’t touch me” while in pain, an echo of Charlotte’s repeated “Don’t you touch me!” as she and Harry first attempt to consummate their affair in a New Orleans hotel.<sup>111</sup> Hemingway and Faulkner even describe the dead bodies similarly. The women’s corpses are almost inhuman: Catherine “was all flat under the sheet,” while Charlotte’s body was “curiously flattened beneath the sheet” and then of “no especial shape.”<sup>112</sup> Faulkner’s invocations of Hemingway, however, reveal more refitting than outright imitation. Frederic communicates with Catherine before she dies, whereas Harry is kept separate from Charlotte at the hospital. Harry faces criminal consequences for Charlotte’s death and does not (famously) leave the hospital alone and go

109. Earle, 194.

110. Ibid., 197.

111. Cf., McHaney, 17; Faulkner, *The Wild Palms*, 527.

112. Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms*, 328; Faulkner, *The Wild Palms*, 702, 703.

to his hotel in the rain. Rather, he is taken to jail by the police officer who has guarded him in the hospital hallway, eventually to stand trial for manslaughter, evidence of how Faulkner took Hemingway's episode in his own direction, moving it from Europe to Mississippi and evincing more defeat in his protagonist's outcome.

As the relationships end in complementary situations, each man reacts with reserve and stoicism. After he acknowledges that Catherine's impending death, Frederic realizes that life is a struggle, that he must adopt a pose of dignity and emotional restraint:

Now Catherine would die. That was what you did. You died. You did not know what it was about. You never had time to learn. They threw you in and told you the rules and the first time they caught you off base they killed you. Or they killed you gratuitously like Aymo. Or gave you the syphilis like Rinaldi. But they killed you in the end. You could count on that. Stay around and they would kill you.<sup>113</sup>

Frederic's world is an unforgiving place in which his and Catherine's early sexual passion ultimately leads to her death. Alone and separated from the war, Frederic tells the story of his war experiences and relationship with Catherine. When he narrativizes these events, she is still alive and in love with Frederic; narrating, albeit with bias, grants Frederic a greater degree of control.<sup>114</sup> Harry feels a similar need for control, as an early passage in "The Wild Palms" shows. After Charlotte initially leaves Harry because he is virtually penniless, Harry finds \$1,278 in a wallet. The newfound wealth funds their departure from New Orleans, a departure to which, surprisingly, Charlotte's husband Francis acquiesces. (We might see this as a nod to Hemingway's Francis Macomber, who sleeps with another man with her husband's knowledge and futile disapproval.) Faulkner foreshadows the troubles that Harry and Charlotte will soon face, Harry thinking, "*I don't believe in sin. It's getting out of timing. You are born submerged in anonymous lockstep with the teeming anonymous myriads of your time and generation; you get out of step once, falter once, and you are trampled to death.*"<sup>115</sup> Though their individual situations differ, Frederic and Harry both feel immersed in a losing struggle with fate in which they "did not know what it was about" and could not "*get out of step once.*"

113. Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms*, 327.

114. Matthew Clark has recently discussed notions of patriarchy, conflict, and union in Frederic's narration, suggesting that Catherine's death is a primary means of Frederic's achieved self-knowledge. See *Narrative Structures and the Language of the Self* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2010).

115. Faulkner, *The Wild Palms*, 531.

The ending strains of “The Wild Palms” enhance the reader’s understanding of Frederic’s final anguish when he is faced with the reality of Catherine’s death. Echoing Frederic’s reaction, Harry realizes that Charlotte, like Catherine for Frederic, must live only in his memory:

But after all memory could live in the old wheezing entrails [. . .], *Not could. Will. I want to. So it is the old meat after all, no matter how old. Because if memory exists outside of the flesh it wont be memory because it wont know what it remembers so when she became not then half of memory became not and if I become not then all of remembering will cease to be.—Yes he thought Between grief and nothing I will take grief.*<sup>116</sup>

Before he contemplates his life-vs.-death choice, Harry has been given a cyanide pill by Francis, Charlotte’s widower. Harry opts for life and memory, not wanting to “*become not*” as Charlotte did; he disposes of the pill and chooses “*grief*” over “*nothing*.” Frederic makes a similar choice; his narration of the story of his relationship with Catherine underscores his attempt at emotional survival. Harry, like Frederic, internalizes his emotional turmoil and follows a Hemingway-esque Code. Blotner and McHaney have noted that both *A Farewell to Arms* and “The Wild Palms” end with their primary aural motif: Frederic walks to his hotel in the steadily audible rain, and Harry hears the palm trees outside his cell, both creating a soundscape for the protagonists’ final thoughts. Frederic and Harry prefer to live on and remember their love—though not without a biased masculine perspective—with memory leading to a kind of immortality for the woman in both cases. Consistent with Harry as a writer of popular, sensational works, the “tragedy is the lovers’ unsuccessful navigation through popular romantic idealism” seen in both the novel’s contextual and intratextual pulp fictions.<sup>117</sup> A certain poignancy inflects the end of both texts, arguably more so in Hemingway’s novel.

A more self-aware, even humorous, reference to *A Farewell to Arms* accompanies the final hospital sequence. As Harry and the policeman are awaiting word of Charlotte’s status, the latter wonders:

“What a fellow hears about hospitals. I wonder if there’s as much laying goes on in them as you hear about.”

“No,” Wilbourne said. “There never is any place.”

“That’s so. But you think of a place like a hospital. All full of beds every which way you turn. And all the other folks flat on their backs where they

116. Ibid., 715.

117. Earle, 206.

can't bother you. And after all doctors and nurses are men and women. And smart enough to take care of themselves or they wouldn't be doctors and nurses. You know how it is."<sup>118</sup>

Whether this policeman has read *A Farewell to Arms* is largely immaterial. Faulkner knew the novel, evidenced by the text's other references to it and by his later invocation of it in his Nobel Prize address. Many of Faulkner's readers would have read Hemingway's novel or seen the 1932 film with Gary Cooper as Frederic—perhaps both. Clearly, the above passage lacks the emotional depth of the similarly described deaths of Catherine and Charlotte. Yet, this query about sexual activity in hospitals stems from Faulkner's refitting of Hemingway's popular, well-known novel of love and war. Harry's terse "There never is any place" sounds Hemingway-esque, a dialogic echo consistent with Faulkner's imbuelement of *A Farewell to Arms* and the Hemingway persona in "The Wild Palms." Perhaps this was the embedded joke Faulkner wanted to use to respond to Hemingway's supposed joke in *Death in the Afternoon*.

In addition to its thematic and imagistic echoes of *A Farewell to Arms*, "The Wild Palms" evokes "Hills Like White Elephants" and "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" linguistically. Harry's description of an abortion first to Buckner and then Charlotte is virtually identical to that of the male protagonist of "Hills Like White Elephants," yet another story of romance troubled by pregnancy and excessive drinking. Without using *abortion* in this Ur-Iceberg Principle story, Hemingway shows two characters talking in deliberately vague language:

"It's really an awfully simple operation, Jig," the man said. "It's not really an operation at all."

[ . . . ]

"I know you wouldn't mind it, Jig. It's not really anything. It's just to let the air in."

The girl did not say anything.

"I'll go with you and I'll stay with you all the time. They just let the air in and then it's all perfectly natural."

"Then what will we do afterward?"

"We'll be fine afterward. Just like we were before."<sup>119</sup>

This couple prefigures Charlotte and Harry. Jig's pregnancy limits their

118. Faulkner, *The Wild Palms*, 698.

119. Hemingway, "Hills Like White Elephants," 212.

freedom (particularly their sexual freedom) and is a source of unhappiness. Neither of these couples is married, at least not to each other in Harry and Charlotte's case. Abortion becomes a means of escape for both couples. Faced with the consequences of their sexual activity, the unnamed man opts for the "simple" route of abortion and seems to convince Jig that his idea is the most feasible.

Faulkner adopts and adapts this language in "The Wild Palms." While in Utah, Harry and Charlotte's sexually active cabinmates, the Buckners, are worried by Billie's pregnancy. Buckner first discusses the idea of abortion with Harry, seemingly hypothetically. Harry twice describes the procedure as "simple enough," the second time adding "A touch with the blade to let the air in."<sup>120</sup> Harry and Charlotte are then faced with a similar restraint on their freedom and sexual activity when Charlotte discovers that she is pregnant. Faulkner again spins off Hemingway by reversing the lovers' roles; Charlotte tries to persuade a reluctant, "afraid" Harry into performing the "simple" abortion.<sup>121</sup> Increasingly worried about their predicament as they travel from Utah to Texas and then Mississippi, Harry asks several doctors to perform the abortion; they all refuse, fearful of the legal consequences. Charlotte then repeatedly tries to convince Harry (himself a doctor) that *he* should do it. Taking initiative from her knowledge of the successful abortion Harry performed on Billie, Charlotte notes, "So it's all right. It's simple. You know that now by your own hand."<sup>122</sup> Wanting a kind of prelapsarian purity in their relationship, Charlotte echoes Hemingway's characters in stressing the situation's urgency to Harry: "I want it to be us again, quick, quick."<sup>123</sup> Charlotte's taking control of the situation—and arguably of her own body—is consistent with her broader portrayal as a strong-willed woman, perhaps suggestive of Brett Ashley,<sup>124</sup> Margot Macomber, or Drusilla Hawk.

After Harry's failed searches for aid (namely abortifacient pills) in a brothel, pharmacy, and various hospitals in San Antonio, Charlotte continues to take initiative and a measure of reproductive control. She, like Hemingway's male protagonist, stresses the apparent simplicity as Harry is about to perform the procedure:

She boiled the water herself and fetched out the meagre instruments they had supplied him with in Chicago and which he had used but once, then lying on the bed she looked up at him. "It's all right. It's simple. You know

120. Faulkner, *The Wild Palms*, 624–25.

121. *Ibid.*, 634–35.

122. *Ibid.*, 634.

123. *Ibid.*, 637.

124. Stoneback, "The Poisoned Spring and the Yellow Flood," 8.

that; you did it before.”

“Yes,” he said. “Simple. You just have to let the air in. All you have to do is let the air—” Then he began to tremble again. “Charlotte, Charlotte.”

“That’s all. Just a touch. Then the air gets in and tomorrow it will all be all over and I will be all right and it will be us again forever and ever.”<sup>125</sup>

Purposefully echoing Hemingway, Faulkner reuses “simple,” “let the air in,” and “touch” and has his characters repeat these words as Hemingway’s characters do—in “Hills Like White Elephants,” “perfectly simple” is used four times, thrice by the man and once by Jig. Both Jig and Charlotte incorporate their male companions’ phrasing when responding to the abortion question; Jig describes the procedure as “perfectly simple” later in the story,<sup>126</sup> while the more proactive Charlotte echoes Harry’s use of “touch” and “simple” in the above passage. All four characters repeat “simple” before idealizing their futures—the man and Jig will be “fine,” Harry and Charlotte will be “all right.”

Consistent with his pattern of reshaping Hemingway in *The Wild Palms*, Faulkner again adapts his rival’s language to tell his own story. He moves the aftermath of this conversation from Spain (a Hemingway locale) to Mississippi (*the* Faulkner locale), and he has both Harry and Charlotte describe the procedure beforehand. Harry’s role in Charlotte’s death eventually gets him a fifty-year sentence for manslaughter in Mississippi’s state prison farm in Parchman. Clearly, “Hills Like White Elephants” epitomizes Hemingway’s aesthetic of omission and implication, seen in its insistence to avoid mentioning *abortion* directly. Faulkner, however, uses variants of the word in the Utah–Texas sequence: Harry’s sardonic idea to “set up as a professional abortionist,” his mention of “abortions” while visiting various hospitals, and the neighbor-doctor’s thoughts about “*Limits! To fornication, adultery, to abortion, crime*” as Harry requests his help after he and Charlotte have been staying in Pascagoula.<sup>127</sup> Faulkner thus accomplishes another redirection: “The Wild Palms” story offers a distinctively Faulknerian treatment of Hemingway’s material in a distinctively Faulknerian place, while “the entire [abortion] section reads like an elaboration of the selfish, feckless, desperate love” seen in Hemingway’s story.<sup>128</sup> This “elaboration,” I would add, squares with the Faulknerian adaptation of Hemingway seen throughout *The Wild Palms*.

Beyond the implicit-explicit abortion theme, there are further direct ref-

125. Faulkner, *The Wild Palms*, 644.

126. Hemingway, “Hills Like White Elephants,” 214.

127. Faulkner, *The Wild Palms*, 636, 644, 684.

128. Stoneback, “The Poisoned Spring and the Yellow Flood,” 11.



erences to Hemingway in “The Wild Palms.” In “The Snows of Kilimanjaro,” an earlier Harry (also a writer) tells his wife Helen, “Your damned money was my armour. My Swift and my Armour.”<sup>129</sup> This is another relationship troubled by excessive drinking and centered on money, though from opposite perspectives. Harry and Helen’s copious finances strain their marriage, and Harry and Charlotte’s quest for money and financial stability strains their affair. Like Faulkner and Hemingway in many ways, these relationships are reverse images: Harry and Helen have money but lack love; Harry and Charlotte have love but lack money; Hemingway’s man and Faulkner’s woman eventually die.

Moreover, Faulkner riffs on Hemingway’s pun on Chicago’s Swift and Armour families by revisiting such wordplay in a three-pronged allusion. While with friends in a Chicago bar before riding through the wealthy suburbs—including Oak Park, perhaps—Harry, Charlotte, and McCord (a journalist) talk a little drunkenly:

Presently it began to seem to Wilbourne that the invisible dog was actually among them. [ . . . ] They had not eaten yet; twice Wilbourne leaned to her: “Hadn’t we better eat something? It’s all right; I can—”

“Yes, it’s all right. It’s fine.” She was not speaking to him. “We’ve got forty-eight dollars too much; just think of that. Even the Armours haven’t got forty-eight dollars too much. Drink up, ye armoured sons. Keep up with the dog.”

“Yah,” McCord said. “Set, ye armoured sons, in a sea of hemingwaves.”

[ . . . ] They were in Evanston now; they had stopped at a drug store and they had a flashlight now, the cab crawling along a suburban and opulent curb while Charlotte, leaning across McCord, played the flashlight upon the passing midnight lawns. “There’s one,” she said.

“I don’t see it,” McCord said.

“Look at that fence. Did you ever hear of an iron fence with a wreath of pansies in each panel that didn’t have an iron dog inside of it?”<sup>130</sup>

Charlotte leaves between the feet of the “cast iron Saint Bernard” the two pork chops that they have been carrying.<sup>131</sup> With this, their drunken conversation changes subjects; the cast-iron dog seems to have been the destination of such quixotic travel. “The Wild Palms” and “The Snows of Kilimanjaro” intersect money, the Chicago area, and the Swift and Armour names—the distinction of course being that Harry and Helen are wealthy and Harry

129. Hemingway, “The Snows of Kilimanjaro,” 57–58.

130. Faulkner, *The Wild Palms*, 560–61.

131. *Ibid.*, 562.

and Charlotte are poor. The connection between “hemingwaves” and “Hemingway” is obvious. Such wordplay shows Faulkner humorously and unquestionably punning on Hemingway’s name as the latter had done with “catfishlike uncatfishivity” in “On Being Shot Again” (*Esquire*, June 1935).

While talking about the Swifts, Armours, and “hemingwaves,” the inebriated Harry, Charlotte, and McCord embody “a direct echo of” a similarly rambling discussion between Jake and Bill in *The Sun Also Rises*.<sup>132</sup> Both conversations are about dogs, be they stuffed, imaginary, or cast-iron. Walking through Paris, Bill asks Jake if he wants a stuffed dog:

“Here’s a taxidermist’s. [ . . . ] Want to buy anything? Nice stuffed dog?”

“Come on,” I said. “You’re pie-eyed.”

“Pretty nice stuffed dogs. [ . . . ] Certainly brighten up your flat.”

“Come on.”

“Just one stuffed dog. I can take ‘em or leave ‘em alone. But listen, Jake.

Just one stuffed dog.”

“Come on.”

“Mean everything in the world to you after you bought it. Simple exchange of values. You give them money. They give you a stuffed dog.”<sup>133</sup>

Harry, Charlotte, and McCord seem just as drunk as Jake and Bill are, and this dialogue, like much of “The Wild Palms,” riffs on Hemingway’s writing. Both conversations are also verbally repetitive—“Come on” (three times) and “stuffed dog[s]” (six times); Harry and Charlotte repeat “dog” as well. Both discussions of dogs also end abruptly as, respectively, Jake and Bill drink more and McCord tells Harry and Charlotte about the lakeside cottage where they will vacation.

Faulkner’s adaptation of a drunken conversation about dogs and “hemingwaves” echoes his use of “let the air in” and “simple” to recall “Hills Like White Elephants.” Faulkner again recasts Hemingway’s dialogue and imagery: the dog is imaginary and then cast iron; the characters are still drunk but are at a restaurant and then in a taxi; Faulkner includes a woman and sets the conversation in a Chicago suburb evocative of Oak Park. This scene’s setting and language point toward Oak Park’s reluctant native son, who owned and perhaps read the book.<sup>134</sup> The intertextuality of “The Wild Palms” thus intensifies the more implicit relationship between *The Unvanquished* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, because Faulkner not only alluded to Hemingway’s work but also recast some of it to tell his own story. Rewriting

132. Stoneback, “The Poisoned Spring and the Yellow Flood,” 8.

133. Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises*, 78.

134. Reynolds, *Hemingway’s Reading*, 123; Brasch and Sigman, 119–20.

some of Hemingway's work, and making himself look stronger in the process, was a bold step for the more reclusive but no less competitively aware Faulkner.

Whereas "The Wild Palms" parallels Hemingway especially closely, "Old Man" contains an explicit reference. Coupled with its counterpart story, "Old Man" completes Faulkner's retort to *Death in the Afternoon*, in that it evokes the book's primary subject matter—bullfighting. Stuck in southern Mississippi, the tall convict briefly works with a group of alligator-hunting "Cajans," who are dirty and speak in near-gibberish. They help the convict, his female companion, and her baby, yet they are primitive and lack recognizable language and creativity:

[E]ach morning he and the Cajan took their separate ways [ . . . ] to comb and creep the secret channels about the lost land from (or out of) which now and then still other pint-sized dark men appeared gobbling, abruptly and as though by magic from nowhere, in other hollowed logs, to follow quietly and watch him at his single combats[. . . ]<sup>135</sup>

As his time and dynamic with the Cajans embody "a form, a ritual"—similar to the ritualism of a bullfight—the tall convict becomes a leader who "set forth to find waiting for him like the *matador* his *aficionados* the small clump of constant and deferential pirogues."<sup>136</sup> At the University of Virginia in 1957, Faulkner elaborated upon these Cajans as "that almost unhuman class of people which live between the Mississippi River and the levee. They belong to no state, they belong to no nation. They—they're not citizens of anything, and sometimes they behave like they don't even belong to the human race."<sup>137</sup>

Faulkner's use of *matador* and *aficionados* is a direct quotation from *The Sun Also Rises* and *Death in the Afternoon*, and more figuratively from the lexicon of Hemingway's public(ized) persona. As Elizabeth Gregory argues in *Quotation and Modern American Poetry*, quotation is the most unequivocal form of literary allusion and became increasingly popular during the modernist era, which she demonstrates in the works of Eliot, Williams, Moore, and other poets. Through this lens, "Old Man" is a conscious "borrow[ing of] words meant to be recognized as such."<sup>138</sup> Although Hemingway was not the only writer of the postwar milieu to talk about matadors and aficionados, he was certainly the most famous modernist to do so. Their readers

135. Faulkner, *The Wild Palms*, 672.

136. *Ibid.*, 672–73.

137. Gwynn and Blotner, 172.

138. Gregory, 2.

knew that Hemingway's public self partly encompassed bullfighting as an indication of his expertise and active, worldly lifestyle. Using *matador* and *aficionados*—as he also used “hemingwaves”—shows Faulkner sparring with Hemingway and purposely riffing on the bullfighting book that criticized him for being overly “prolific.” Faulkner would again invoke bullfighting imagery more constructively in *A Fable* (1954), a book Hemingway may not have read but nonetheless criticized, as I discuss in Chapter 4.

While “Old Man” is not as expressly critical of Hemingway as *Death in the Afternoon* is of him, Faulkner's subhuman “*aficionados*” diction snipes at him and at something that had become almost sacrosanct for Hemingway. Just as Faulkner's repetition of “simple” in “The Wild Palms,” for instance, is resounding, “*aficionado*” and “*matador*” are not coincidental. Faulkner directly alluded to the core of Hemingway's public image; the control, form, and ritualism of bullfighting undergirded his aesthetic and gendered sensibility, which Faulkner would have known from the popular press and marketing of Hemingway. His characterizing these Cajans/*aficionados* as hard-working yet “deferential” to the convict/*matador* signifies the text's dynamic between “Old Man” (Faulkner's voice) and “The Wild Palms” (Hemingway's “voice”). Faulkner insinuates that one of his stoical, strong characters is superior to a set of “almost unhuman” characters suggestive of Hemingway, most of whose male characters exemplify stoicism and strength. Instead of “matador” and “aficionados,” Faulkner could have written “leader” and “followers” and still depicted the convict as the person in control. Perhaps not wanting to use such (Hemingway-esque) understatement, Faulkner structured most of *The Wild Palms* as a reaction to Hemingway's level of cultural standing, influence, and competitiveness by the end of the decade. While this association is not an outright criticism, the story's *aficionados* may have been another “joke” for Faulkner, in much the same way that Hemingway's reference to him in *Death in the Afternoon* was, to Hemingway's mind, an ostensible jest. Faulkner seems to be seeing himself as the superior matador, to whom Hemingway was a “deferential” aficionado. Faulkner took a more discreet route to refer to Hemingway's writing than the latter took (and would continue to take) to refer to his writing, but his competitive edge was no less sharp.

The *matador-aficionados* reference is the only direct invocation of Hemingway in “Old Man,” although we could also see the tall convict as a Hemingway archetype, given his stoicism and resolve.<sup>139</sup> The story's effective quotation of Hemingway enables us to read *The Wild Palms* as Faulkner's extended critical treatment of well-known Hemingway themes, relation-

139. Stoneback, “The Poisoned Spring and the Yellow Flood,” *passim*.

ships, and language. The text's implicit dialogue continues the Faulkner-Hemingway rivalry through a call-and-response structure in which Faulkner riffed on and adapted Hemingway's works, partly to overlap the authors, partly to suggest his own superiority. The clearest way that one can see the symbolic unity between competitors achieved in the text is, ironically, through something omitted. Faulkner seems to have used the Iceberg Principle himself, a more selective example of how Hemingway adopted a Faulknerian stream of consciousness in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*.

Harry is convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to at least fifty years at Parchman prison farm, where the tall convict is serving the remainder of his twenty-five-year sentence, beginning in 1938. The tall convict was sentenced to fifteen years in 1921 and penalized with an additional ten years in 1927, while Harry was sentenced to "not less than fifty years" in 1938.<sup>140</sup> Interestingly, the tall convict would not have been in prison in 1938 had it not been for the ten years added to his sentence, which implies a possible meeting between both men at Parchman. Faulkner does not include any scene with Harry and the tall convict together, but both, by the end of *The Wild Palms*, should be in the same place. That Faulkner suggests a buried, though resonant, connection between two characters from stories that he linked to himself and Hemingway resembles a metacommentary on his process of adapting Hemingway's work. Implying a connection between his apparently separate stories and characters, he may have thought, was a way to reveal his awareness of dialectical connections he was making between himself, Hemingway, and their oeuvres.

Faulkner's use of Hemingway's themes, diction, and imagery indicates that he knew the latter's work well and that he felt some connection with him as a fellow modernist, Anderson protégé, and challenger. In *The Wild Palms*, there is a "dialogic structure" between the text and Hemingway's works, as often occurred when one poet directly quoted another—most notably Eliot in *The Waste Land*.<sup>141</sup> Faulkner's deliberate intertextuality with Hemingway suggests a degree of interdependence, since one cannot adequately comprehend the broader context of *The Wild Palms* without looking at the Hemingway works to which it alludes. His "literary reiving" of stories, past and present authors, and Southern history implied a recasting and collaging of old materials into a new, distinctly Faulknerian form.<sup>142</sup> He was in part pushed to do so with Hemingway's work because of their rivalry, the threat each posed to the other's desired canonical placement, and Faulkner's aspirations to outshine him.

140. Faulkner, *The Wild Palms*, 509, 720, 713.

141. Gregory, 3.

142. Urgo, 6.

As a figurative Faulkner–Hemingway intertext, *The Wild Palms* completes the 1930s chapter of the intertextual dialectic begun with *Salmagundi* and, more significantly, *Death in the Afternoon*. While there are negative elements of Faulkner’s incorporation of signature Hemingway elements in both “The Wild Palms” and “Old Man,” there is also an undertone of respect. Faulkner partly implies that Hemingway’s work was good enough to assimilate into his own fiction, even if he did recast Hemingway’s material, describe primitive alligator hunters in his language, and effectively suggest his own superiority. At some level, each wanted to play the literary *matador* to the other’s *aficionado*, which Faulkner in effect does in *The Wild Palms*. He would enact a similar role of the regnant writer in mid-1947, after he offered a University of Mississippi writing class: a ranking of his five best contemporaries, a provocative response to an undergraduate’s somewhat innocuous question.

# 3

## “GLAD TO SHOOT IT OUT”

### *Ranking and Dueling in the 1940s*

*Charlie there is no future in anything. I hope you agree. That is why I like it at a war. Every day and every night there is a strong possibility that you will get killed and not have to write. I have to write to be happy whether I get paid for it or not. But it is a hell of a disease to be born with. I like to do it. Which is even worse. That makes it from a disease into a vice. Then I want to do it better than anybody has ever done it which makes it into an obsession. An obsession is terrible.*

—Hemingway to Charles Scribner, February 24, 1940

*Maybe the watching all of this coming to a head for the last year is why I can't write, don't seem to want to write, that is. But I can still write. That is, I haven't said at 42 all that is in the cards for me to say. And that wont do any good either, but surely it is still possible to scratch the face of the supreme Obliteration and leave a decipherable scar of some sort.*

—Faulkner to Robert Haas, May 27, 1940

It could have been a riposte in an ongoing duel, or merely an objective view of a few American writers. It was probably some of both, though it sounded a lot like a confrontational, challenging response to an undergraduate's question. While answering questions in a University of Mississippi Creative Writing class in April 1947, Faulkner was asked to rank his contemporaries. His answer initiated the definitive episode in his ongoing dynamic with Hemingway:

- Q: *Whom do you consider the five most important contemporary writers?*  
A: 1. Thomas Wolfe. 2. Dos Passos. 3. Ernest Hemingway. 4. Willa Cather.  
5. John Steinbeck.

Q: *If you don't think it too personal, how do you rank yourself with contemporary writers?*

A: 1. Thomas Wolfe: he had much courage and wrote as if he didn't have long to live; 2. William Faulkner; 3. Dos Passos; 4. Ernest Hemingway: he has no courage, has never crawled out on a limb. He has never been known to use a word that might cause the reader to check with a dictionary to see if it is properly used; 5. John Steinbeck: at one time I had great hopes for him—now I don't know.<sup>1</sup>

Faulkner could have meant this ranking as an impartial, even off-the-cuff, observation. More likely, he wanted his rating to have a more competitive tinge, in that he “chose to annotate his choices as he went along, developing reasons for his rankings” and disparaging two seemingly lesser coevals.<sup>2</sup> Faulkner places himself first among living writers, since Wolfe had been dead almost nine years at the time of the ranking. Although Faulkner's pantheon of writers includes Hemingway, his placement and commentary prompted “a mild farrago of statements which kept him busy off and on for a decade.”<sup>3</sup> Regardless of whether Faulkner—ostensibly a private, noncombative writer—meant to be provocative, Hemingway saw this as a shot across his bow. His placement of Hemingway below both himself and Dos Passos proved central to the Faulkner–Hemingway rivalry, because it led to the only known direct communication between the two men—four letters in all, in which they added to their mutual canon of rivalry and shared influence. Faulkner's ranking was pivotal because it gnawed at Hemingway for years to come; he could not, or would not, let it go. As always, Hemingway was particularly attuned to criticisms that Faulkner made of him. He was even more angered by these particular remarks because they called some level of his courage into question.

## DECIPHERABLE SCARS AND TERRIBLE OBSESSIONS

This ranking and its reverberations came toward the end of a decade in which Faulkner and Hemingway had each struggled to maintain his brisk publication rate of the 1930s. Both men, to recall James Watson's analysis of Faulkner's public persona, still directed their attention to “self-presentation and performance” in negotiating the artistic and public sides of their individual personae. They were, as this chapter's epigraphs show, affected by their

1. Qtd. in Inge, 71.

2. Monteiro, “The Faulkner–Hemingway Rivalry,” 78.

3. Walser, 172.



writing and emotional problems as they struggled with literary contribution and popular appeal. Hemingway saw his trade as a creative illness, while Faulkner doubted his ability and dedication. Although only Hemingway would travel to Europe to cover the war, in 1940 he and Faulkner sensed that a second world war was coming, and perhaps that this potential conflict and its global effects would intensify their own writing and competition.

For Faulkner, the 1940s ended better than they started. For most of the decade, he continued to work in Hollywood primarily to make money and had continuing emotional and marital troubles, due in part to his alcoholism and rekindled affair with Meta Carpenter. Despite most of his work being readily unavailable in hardcover,<sup>4</sup> Faulkner felt, as he wrote to Haas, that he was not finished creatively. His guarded optimism in 1940 was partly due to the three books he had published since 1938: *The Unvanquished*, *The Wild Palms*, and *The Hamlet*. During the 1940s, he would leave a few more "decipherable" scars—such as *Go Down, Moses*, *Intruder in the Dust*, and *Knight's Gambit*, though not without some struggle. Arriving mid-decade, *The Portable Faulkner* helped reignite his public success. By decade's end, Faulkner had renewed "the process of creation."<sup>5</sup> This recharged creativity would lead to a number of books and honors: among them, *Collected Stories*, *Requiem for a Nun*, *A Fable*, the Nobel Prize, two National Book Awards, and two Pulitzer Prizes.

Although Hemingway would receive similar honors in his lifetime, the 1940s were troublesome for him as well. His artistic fate was different from Faulkner's in the decade that began with the bestselling *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and ended with the much-criticized *Across the River and into the Trees*, a period in which he published an introduction to *Men at War* and a handful of articles for *PM*, *Collier's*, and *Holiday*. During such creative fallowness, he experienced serious writing and emotional problems, even as he was working on *Across the River and into the Trees* and what would become *Islands in the Stream*. He never lacked public recognition from various articles and photographs chronicling his activities with Gary Cooper, Joe DiMaggio, Marlene Dietrich, and others. He, for instance, was one of the select clientele at Toots Shor's New York restaurant, joining such famous patrons as Frank Sinatra, Joe Louis, Jackie Gleason, and DiMaggio, whom Hemingway would later glorify as "the Great DiMaggio" in *The Old Man and the Sea*.<sup>6</sup> Through his public associations with the "Yankee Clipper" and "Old Blue Eyes," "Papa"

4. See David Earle's *Re-Covering Modernism*, which discusses Malcolm Cowley's "prejudice against the popular form" in declaring Faulkner "effectively out of print" in *The Portable Faulkner*, when numerous Faulkner works were available in mass-market paperback (203).

5. Blotner, *Faulkner*, 500.

6. Halberstam, 135–36.

became known more for his image than his literary output or avant-gardism. His problem, as he saw it, was that he gave the reading public no new fiction for nearly ten years—only journalism, an essay on writing and war, and personality profiles for *Life*, the *New Yorker*, and other periodicals.

Emotionally, this decade was grueling for Hemingway, and his emotional troubles went hand in hand with his writing problems. At Martha Gellhorn's behest, she and Hemingway were divorced in December 1945, and he soon married Mary Welsh in March 1946. He had initiated his first two divorces from Hadley and Pauline, but he was agitated by Martha's urging their divorce before he himself could, vilifying her in much of his subsequent work and correspondence, which she returned in some of her own. That Gellhorn was such a successful and active journalist who frequently traveled throughout their marriage seemed, to Hemingway, a slight at his masculine ego, just as her initiation of their divorce seemed. As we might imagine, such persistent psychological problems complicated his writing. By the mid-1940s, he had seen and covered the war, but writing about it imaginatively was not as seemingly effortless as it had been in the 1920s and 1930s:

For five years now he had written no fiction. In his writing room was an almost forgotten fragment of a Bimini story that referred back to the island's heyday as a rumrunner's haven during prohibition. Other than that, he had used up most of what he knew from the previous decade, but his recent war experiences were filled with useable material. So the difficulty was not the subject matter, it was the act itself—sitting down alone with pencil and paper to put down the words in their effective order.<sup>7</sup>

Hemingway's desire to be the author-as-celebrity was taking its toll on the *author*, who was seemingly not "alone" enough to focus on his work. To his mind, it would be difficult to outwrite Steinbeck or Dos Passos if he could not create anything worthy of publication. If he could not match them—whom he thought far inferior to himself—then surpassing Faulkner may have been out of the question. Though he intended to keep publishing in the 1940s and 1950s, he published only two books after *For Whom the Bell Tolls* in his lifetime—*Across the River and into the Trees* and *The Old Man and the Sea* (winner of the Pulitzer Prize). His late productivity paled in comparison to Faulkner's, potentially increasing his personal and professional anxiety. As he wrote to Scribner in 1940, his daemonic—though flagging—competitive spirit drove him to outwrite his predecessors and contemporaries. Because of his minimal artistic output in the decade, he felt himself devalued in this

7. Reynolds, *Hemingway: The Final Years*, 128.

ongoing competition with other authors, first and foremost Faulkner.

Although it would soon crescendo by the late 1940s, the Faulkner–Hemingway rivalry, as well as its nuanced psychological influence, was at a diminuendo for some of the decade. Because their writing and individual artistic acclaim had slowed, their *mano a mano* contest quieted as each man tried to renew his creativity and mitigate the drain of external circumstances—Hemingway’s celebrity, Faulkner’s work in Hollywood, both men’s struggling marriages—on their writing. Because of their own various problems, they could have felt inferior to their milieu; if they felt their individual creative drives to have diminished, then both may have been increasingly anxious about who controlled their symbolic contest. Such mutual wariness seems to have brought Faulkner to revive their duel when he ranked himself as the best of living writers in April 1947. Faulkner’s writing problems and struggles with what became *A Fable* perhaps fueled his assertion of his own superiority vis-à-vis the literary field, while Hemingway’s “disease” of writing inflected his overreaction to Faulkner’s remarks.

In the 1940s, Hemingway’s *Men at War*, Faulkner’s screenplay for *To Have and Have Not*, and Faulkner’s ranking further stratified their rivalry and manifested their dual psychocompetitive influence. Beyond their published texts, their letters of this decade (primarily to Malcolm Cowley) contain numerous cross-references and appraisals. In corresponding with a major literary critic, the authors indirectly sparred with and debated each other. Cowley was often audience to their varied assessments and, after 1947, their thoughts about Faulkner’s ranking. With an anthology, a screenplay, letters, and a highly charged comment in the 1940s, the authors added to a joint oeuvre of allusive and sparring texts that shaped their personal aesthetics, rivalry, and contending canonical places.

## FAIR PLAY?

The early 1940s was a time of war. “The enormous wealth, energy and population increase released by Europe’s industrial revolution in the nineteenth century had transformed the world. [. . .] It had built the infrastructure—schools, universities, libraries, laboratories, churches, missions—of a vibrant, creative and optimistic world civilization.”<sup>8</sup> This second global war affected soldiers and civilians, the latter troubled by “the inexorable progress from light to heavy duty” as America entered the war but realized that

8. Keegan, *The Second World War*, 12.

combat would not end quickly.<sup>9</sup> America's intellectual, emotional, and literary landscapes would feel the far-reaching effects of such a vast, destructive war. One cultural mechanism for understanding the war's effects was the literary anthology. "Wartime," Paul Fussell shows, "was notably the age of anthologies."<sup>10</sup> The era's many anthologies—*A Subtreasury of American Humor* (1941), *This Is My Best* (1942), and *American Harvest* (1942)<sup>11</sup>—stemmed from

the desire in both anthologist and reader to survey "the heritage" as a way of seeking an answer to the pressing question, What are we fighting for? The war forced everyone back onto traditional cultural possessions and responses and forced people to consider which things were valuable enough to be preserved and enjoyed over and over again. If the enemy insisted on the principle *Ein Volk, Ein Reich* ["One People, One Kingdom"], the principle of variety honored by the anthologies was a way of taking an anti-totalitarian, anti-uniformitarian stance, a way of honoring the pluralism and exuberance of the "democratic" Allied cause.<sup>12</sup>

Early in the war, Crown Publishers sought to capitalize on the popular importance of anthologies in what became *Men at War*. Sensing the strong link between war and writing, and aware of the potential benefit of foregrounding a seasoned, masculine writer in the project, Crown enlisted Hemingway to help augment this "age of anthologies." Readers of *Men at War*, it was thought, would arrive at a broader understanding of war's "traditional cultural possessions and responses" in part because of Hemingway, whose military experience was tightly woven into his art and whose war writings became bestselling books and popular films.

Considering Hemingway's vast, much-publicized military experience—World War I, the Greco-Turkish War, the Spanish Civil War, the Sino-Japanese War—he was fittingly involved in a project to collect "the best war stories of all time," as the front cover proclaims. In March 1942, before he and Martha Gellhorn went to cover the war themselves in, respectively, May 1944 and September 1943, Hemingway took on this editorial job as a home-front literary contribution to the war effort. In the late winter of 1942, Max

9. Fussell, *Wartime*, 7.

10. *Ibid.*, 244.

11. Interestingly, *This Is My Best* contains Hemingway's "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" and Faulkner's "That Evening Sun Go Down" in a collection that, in editor Whit Burnett's words, provides "a panorama of time and place, presented to us by the best guides we have in America, the creative writers of our time" (xiii).

12. Fussell, *Wartime*, 245.

Perkins had talked to Crown's Nat Wartels, who had met Hemingway in Cuba and run the idea of the anthology by him. Having arranged the deal's specifics with Crown, Perkins noted on March 12 that Wartels wanted to include excerpts from *A Farewell to Arms* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*: "[i]f you want us to avoid it we will, but I myself would not be against it at all, if proper compensation were given. Anything that spreads a writer's public is to his advantage."<sup>13</sup> Ever astute, Perkins sensed that *Men at War* would enhance Hemingway's acclaim, especially since he had published little since *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and was, at the time, frustrated with a projected (but never-published) story collection.<sup>14</sup> Hemingway agreed to edit and introduce *Men at War*, published on October 22. His introduction comments on the selections and the artist's responsibilities when writing about war. As he told Perkins on May 30, he upheld high aesthetic standards by focusing on the facts of war in his selections, introduction, and his own fiction. In contrast, much of Hemingway's journalism was self-promoting. "Voyage to Victory" (*Collier's*, July 22, 1944), for instance, focuses on Hemingway's skills as map-reader and impromptu navigator on an LCV(P) (that is, a "Landing Craft, Vehicle, Personnel") during the invasion of Normandy. As in much of his journalism, the focus of "Voyage to Victory" is split between the invasion and Hemingway himself, who often exaggerated—even invented—his military experiences. Such journalism notwithstanding, a May 1942 letter to Perkins notes Hemingway's dedication to his craft:

It was the writers in the last war who wrote propaganda that finished themselves off that way. There is plenty of stuff that you believe absolutely that you can write which is useful enough without having to write propaganda. [ . . . ] We have had Steinbeck's [*Bombs Away*] and I would rather cut three fingers off my throwing hand than to have written it. If we are fighting for what we believe in we might as well always keep on believing in what we have believed, and for me this is to write nothing that I do not think is the absolute truth.<sup>15</sup>

Hemingway later confessed to Perkins that he intended "to try to make this book into a good weapon" as a non-propagandistic collection to help soldiers and civilians understand war historically and artistically.<sup>16</sup> Although his only new contribution to *Men at War* would be his sixteen-page introduction, Hemingway wanted to stand by his aesthetic principles in what he wrote and

13. Bruccoli, *The Only Thing That Counts*, 318.

14. Berg, 405–7.

15. Bruccoli, *The Only Thing That Counts*, 318–19.

16. *Ibid.*, 320.

in what he selected for the book, hence his dedication to conveying “absolute truth” in his editorial persona. An added element of this “truth” was his competitive temperament and ways of negotiating himself in relation to other writers, as one of his selections reveals.

Nearly 1,100 pages long, *Men at War* collects such diverse authors as Winston Churchill, Theodore Roosevelt, Xenophon, and Rudyard Kipling. *Men at War* also contains excerpts from *A Farewell to Arms* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, the NANA dispatch “The Chauffeurs of Madrid” (May 22, 1937)—and Faulkner’s “Turn About.” Hemingway’s essay and collection of war writings attempted to show that war was neither mysterious nor glorifiable, which he knew from rugged personal experience: “A writer’s job is to tell the truth. His standard of fidelity should be so high that his invention, out of his experience, should produce a truer account than anything factual can be.”<sup>17</sup> One such “good writer” himself, Hemingway aesthetically allied himself with such past models as Tolstoy, Stendhal, Kipling, and Crane (included in *Men at War*), while distancing himself from Arthur Guy Empey (whose “Over the Top” was “a pitiful piece of bravado writing”) and Dos Passos (whose *Three Soldiers* is “unreadable today”),<sup>18</sup> both of whom were left out. Always passing literary judgment, Hemingway illustrates that he is conversant with and experienced in literary and military matters, thus reprising his writer/active man persona as editor-veteran.<sup>19</sup> As he did in some of his later correspondence, Hemingway foregrounded his persona when discussing the text’s contents and themes. As an author who had accrued considerable experience—first as a wounded ambulance driver and then as a journalist—in various conflicts, he projected himself as an authority on war and writing, just as he had done with bullfighting and writing in *Death in the Afternoon*.

In this intellectual-experiential role, Hemingway thought that “Turn About” was worthy of inclusion with his own war writing and, maybe a bit begrudgingly, that Faulkner was on a par with him. By anthologizing his own work with “Turn About,” he associated himself with but one-upped Faulkner. Hemingway’s only direct commentary about the story is in the introduction: “For excitement and for a great story which should do much to make us appreciate and understand our British allies, read ‘Turn About,’ by William Faulkner.”<sup>20</sup> Hemingway had outlined his opinions on the contents and deleted selections in the same May 30 letter to Perkins quoted above: “I have read over 370 galleys and have thrown out much of the worst stuff. [ . . . ] Have got him to put in some good flying stuff” and to cut a

17. Hemingway, *Men at War*, xiv.

18. *Ibid.*, xiv, xv.

19. Cf., Raeburn, *passim*.

20. *Ibid.*, xxii.

lot of disingenuous, confusing material.<sup>21</sup> By implication, "Turn About" is "good flying stuff," not "phony" or "disorganized," and merits inclusion. Hemingway lauds Faulkner indirectly, but his competitiveness prevented him from offering overt praise. Hemingway included "Turn About" and ostensibly equated Faulkner with Tolstoy, T. E. Lawrence, and he himself. Yet, the choice of "Turn About" suggests Hemingway's desire to look better, since some of his own superior work was also in the anthology. *Men at War* shows Hemingway misrepresenting Faulkner's abilities, separating himself, and seemingly writing about war better than Faulkner had—all while offering a level of praise and respect.

Faulkner had published "Turn About" in *The Saturday Evening Post* in March 1932 and, soon thereafter, worked with Howard Hawks to adapt the story into *Today We Live*, released in the spring of 1933.<sup>22</sup> Collected in the "War is the province of chance" section (which included the *Aeneid's* section on the Trojan Horse and *War and Peace's* account of the Battle of Borodino), Faulkner's story depicts aerial and naval combat episodes in which the American Captain Bogard and British torpedo boatman Claude Hope join forces. Seemingly out of his element in Captain Bogard's American Handley-Page early in the story, Hope proves himself helpful in combat: he loads and fires the Lewis machine gun on his own, and his face wears a look of "child-like interest and delight" during the mission. Faulkner notes in particular "the click and whistle" of the bomb-dropping mechanism, the plane's "long upward bounce," and the beams of the German spotlights that seem to freeze the frenzied action.<sup>23</sup> After the plane lands on a beach, Hope is impressed by Bogard and McGinnis's heroics, especially a critical error that he mistakes for daring: they realize that one of the bombs had not dropped and dangled precariously from the right wing, tracing a "delicate line in the sand" parallel to the wheels' tracks. This aerial combat echoes Faulkner's military persona, in particular the danger and courage with which he associated bombing missions in both his published and personal war fictions. Although this combat is not rooted in personal experience, as were those of Tolstoy, for example, Faulkner approaches war's "absolute truth" that Hemingway sought. He describes the plane and its maneuvers clearly, captures Hope's British vernacular, avoids glorifying war, and accurately depicts a bombing mission and of a near-fatal error that Hope interprets as combat bravery.

Having been involved in a mission that he "shan't forget," Hope invites Bogard on one of the missions that he, his eccentric captain Ronnie, and

21. Bruccoli, *The Only Thing That Counts*, 318–19.

22. Minter, 138, 141.

23. Faulkner, "Turn About," 489.



their two-man crew undertake.<sup>24</sup> Their vehicle is a steel torpedo boat that, though fast and maneuverable, is quite vulnerable. The boat is “about thirty feet long and about three feet wide” and has “no seats save a long cylindrical ridge which ran along the driver’s seat to the stern.”<sup>25</sup> This cylinder houses the torpedo, which sits dangerously close to the engines but only concerns Bogard. Dueling with an enemy freighter, Bogard is stunned by Hope’s courage. They are in a small boat that hunts and torpedoes better-armed ships, and their primary weapon launches uncomfortably close to their own boat. Bogard sees that this type of naval warfare requires great courage. Hope’s crew engages with and cripples a ship that dwarfs theirs, another act matching the masculine courage in war that Bogard embodied and that, in the late 1910s and 1920s, Faulkner invented for himself.

Though nauseated and worried during the torpedo boat’s battle with the freighter, Bogard was inspired by the crew’s boldness, as he embarked on a similarly daring (and successful) mission about a month later. Soon after a newspaper account listing Hope’s boat among recent casualties has found its way to the American aerodrome, a bulletin from headquarters commends Bogard and his crew “[f]or extraordinary valor over and beyond the routine of duty” in which they, “on a daylight raid and without scout protection, destroyed with bombs an ammunition depot several miles behind the enemy’s lines.” On a solo raid—just as Hope’s boat was on a solo mission—Bogard and his crew “partially demolished” a château housing German generals and got so close that “he could discern separately the slate tiles of the roof”—just as Ronnie piloted the boat precariously close to the freighter that they eventually torpedoed.<sup>26</sup> Bogard’s disregard for military rules on such a mission suggests a strategic “turn about”: he followed Hope and Ronnie’s lead by attacking German headquarters on his own, an offense that, had it failed, could have gotten him a court-martial instead of a commendation. Faulkner links the death of Hope with Bogard’s courageous bombing raid through juxtaposed texts: the bulletin noting Bogard’s heroics directly follows the news of the loss of the torpedo boat.

Considering Hemingway’s high aesthetic standards for *Men at War*, “Turn About” fits well in a collection that tried to historicize war and make it understandable artistically. Its inclusion tacitly acknowledges Faulkner’s stature, insofar as Hemingway associated, perhaps even equated, him with premier war writers. While he did not praise him as highly as he praised Tolstoy and Crane—he was always loath to praise Faulkner directly—Hemingway gestured toward good will by associating “Turn About” with major world

24. Ibid., 492.

25. Ibid., 493, 496.

26. Ibid., 509.



literature, even with his own work. As in *The Wild Palms*, Hemingway linked himself with and one-upped Faulkner by associating their work and names. Seemingly worthy of *Men at War*'s standards, "Turn About" does not make any strong pro- or antiwar claims, nor does it unduly exalt war. It matches Hemingway's aesthetic by offering two realistic, exciting, and heroic episodes of aerial and naval combat.

However, Hemingway's agonistic drive trumped any show of respect. While his inclusion of "Turn About" admits Faulkner's prominence, the choice of this particular story also reveals his competitiveness, an act reminiscent of Faulkner's use of *matador* and *aficionados* in "Old Man." "Turn About" is a relatively minor story lacking the impact of Faulkner's other war writings—*Soldiers' Pay*, *Sartoris*, or *The Unvanquished*, sections of any of which likely could have been included in *Men at War* instead. The anthologized story is more representative of Hemingway than of Faulkner: it is a realistic depiction of air and sea battle; it does not deal with the Civil War; and it does not adopt Faulkner's more avant-garde style and narrative patterning. Although "Turn About" is not a weak story, it does not match the emotion and lucidity of *A Farewell to Arms* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, thus making Hemingway look markedly better by comparison. That Hemingway downplays Faulkner's talents with a subpar story, distinguishes himself with better material, and sets up his own work as an antithetical completion underscores his competitive animus. To Hemingway's mind, "Turn About" does not explore war as thoroughly as two of his bestselling novels, while it also lacks the presumed firsthand personal experience Hemingway had woven in to "The Chauffeurs of Madrid" and the novels.

Hemingway's competitive drive and influence-anxiety were at work here: his selections outshine Faulkner's, and he eagerly wanted to make himself look better and regain professional leverage. As he would later do in numerous letters, Hemingway curbs his praise of Faulkner, revealing some concern over their canonical places. Choosing—or at least not cutting—"Turn About" enabled Hemingway to accept Faulkner's canonical importance and assert his own greater importance with stronger work. His including a Faulkner story suggestive of his own work embodies his mixed attitudes: begrudging praise (including the story); one-upmanship (including his own superior material); insecurity (feeling the need to outdo him). Hemingway thus tried to make himself look better threefold: in *Men at War*, their ongoing rivalry, and the broader literary scene. Hemingway may have sensed that they shared ideas about war and writing, but Faulkner's canonical value felt threatening to his own, hence the inclusion of a story whose events look mediocre compared to El Sordo's last stand and the Caporetto Retreat. Advantage Hemingway, at least for the time being.

## FROM “LOSER” TO HERO

Two years after *Men at War*, Faulkner was involved in a screenwriting project that juxtaposed Hemingway and himself, a project with an audience comparable to, possibly bigger than, that for *Men at War*. In July 1942, around the time that Hemingway was in editor-veteran mode, Faulkner had returned to Warner Brothers, striking up some of his old relationships: his professional work with Howard Hawks, friendships with Hawks and Clark Gable, and affair with Meta Carpenter. Pessimistic, depressed, often hampered by drink, and concerned with his financial struggles, he worked on several screenplays—among them, the never-made *The De Gaulle Story* and an adaptation of *The Big Sleep*. The screenplay for the former, co-written by Faulkner and Robert Buckner, has a passing reference to *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and anticipates that in *Requiem for a Nun*. A character, Emilie, remembers her father's friend: “one night he brought a book, an American book written by a Mr. Hemingway. He would read it to us at night and translate it. It told about a young girl to whom that [i.e., rape by enemy soldiers] had happened also, and about an older woman who was very wise about people anyway, who said how, if you refused to accept something, it could not happen to you. And I was comforted.”<sup>27</sup> Since this film was never made, Hemingway was unaware of this reference, but it again indicates how Faulkner's attentiveness to Hemingway could inform his writing projects.

Faulkner had “three principal concerns” that made screenwriting work seem necessary, all of them with a common economic denominator: “selling enough stories to meet the current crisis, trying for a screenwriting job, or seeking a commission.”<sup>28</sup> At the time, his artistic reputation was unstable, and many of his books were unavailable in hardcover or selling poorly. After two intermittent years in Hollywood, Faulkner was still struggling artistically, financially, and emotionally; his need for money drew him to collaborative script work in Hollywood and away from what he saw as his real creative work in Oxford. Although Faulkner worked somewhat hard to revise screenplays, he was pessimistic about his own writing. He professed as much to his agent, Harold Ober, on April 22, 1944. “War is bad for writing” because

Something must give way; let it be the writing, art, it has happened before, will happen again. It's too bad I lived now though. [ . . . ] I have a considerable talent, perhaps as good as any coeval. But I am 46 now. So what I will mean soon by ‘have’ is ‘had.’

27. Qtd. in Faulkner and Furthman, 17–18.

28. Blotner, *Faulkner*, 436.

When and if I get at it again, I will write to you. After being present for a while at the frantic strivings of motion pictures to justify their existence in a time of strife and terror, I have about come to the conclusion which they dare not admit: that the printed word and all its ramifications and photographications is nihil nisi fui [. . . ]<sup>29</sup>

That "[w]ar is bad for writing" indicates his misgivings about his own work; Faulkner, only forty-six, felt himself in his career's twilight.<sup>30</sup> He sensed that books and films amounted to "nothing"—the Latin *nihil*—but a quest to make money during an international crisis. At the time of this revealing letter, he had just finished the final shooting script of *To Have and Have Not* in a dark, almost exhausted, mental state, due to his work in Hollywood and to his lack of work on his own material. Despite his doubts, Faulkner had, in February 1944, met with an intriguing opportunity—adapting a Hemingway novel—that could reinvigorate his creativity and professional standing, since he was "as good as any coeval."

Thus he began, at Hawks's behest, revising the *To Have and Have Not* screenplay on which Hawks and Jules Furthman had been working; it would star Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall and be released in theaters that October. Figuratively, screenplay of *To Have and Have Not* was a joint effort between Hemingway, Hawks, Furthman, and Faulkner. Hemingway published the novel that introduced Harry Morgan as his tough, independent-minded, and mortal hero, and he sold the film rights to Howard Hughes for \$10,000 in 1939. Hawks bought the rights from Hughes for \$92,500 in 1943 and sold the rights to Warner Brothers for the same amount, plus a one-quarter interest.<sup>31</sup> An indirect alliance between Faulkner and Hemingway, *To Have and Have Not's* screenplay underscores some key differences in their rivaling aesthetic visions and ways of making money. As another Faulknerian rewriting of Hemingway's work, this screenplay extends the one-upmanship seen in *The Wild Palms*. An "unusual artistic mix" bearing the imprint of both men's art and names, the screenplay adopts the established point-counterpoint structure of their dynamic.<sup>32</sup> Faulkner again veered from Hemingway's work when helping revise the script and reconfiguring Hemingway's characters, narrative, and style.

As producer/director, Hawks began working with Furthman on the original screenplay early in 1943 and had both Bogart (Harry) and Bacall (Marie) cast by the middle of the year. Initially, Hawks and Furthman maintained

29. Faulkner, *Selected Letters of William Faulkner*, 181.

30. *Ibid.*, 180.

31. Faulkner and Furthman, 16.

32. Gladstein, "Hemingway, Faulkner, and Hawks," 172.

fidelity; they finished the initial screenplay on October 14, although there was much revision to come, including changes to the film's setting, main characters, and ending.<sup>33</sup> Set in Cuba, this first version perhaps described Cuba's political tensions too well. Having gotten wind of Hawks's intent to "film a novel that might embarrass the Batista regime," the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs did not want the film to "reflect badly on Cuba," then an ally in the war.<sup>34</sup> Hawks and Warner Brothers shifted the setting from Cuba to French Martinique, thus quelling any potential political tensions between the United States and Cuba. Needing heavy revisions, Hawks dispatched Faulkner to revise the script a short time after Furthman had completed his work; Faulkner and Hawks then completed the screenplay that Furthman and Hawks had begun. At the outset, "Faulkner suggested that *To Have and Have Not* be rewritten so that the political interest would be the conflict between the Free French and the Vichy government." He was hired on February 22; he and Hawks would deviate significantly from Hemingway's storyline, dialogue, and characterization.<sup>35</sup> As dramatic as it could be to envision Faulkner rewriting Hemingway's novel solely by choice, he made so many changes because he essentially had to for Warner Brothers to release the film with commercial success and for Hawks to give Faulkner much-needed future screenwriting work. The Faulkner-Hawks *To Have and Have Not* is substantially different from Hemingway's, some obvious differences being the setting (Martinique vs. Cuba), time period (prologue vs. time present), and Harry's ultimate fate (he lives in the film). Nevertheless, it has value as an adaptation of Hemingway's work.

*To Have and Have Not*, like many film adaptations, has spawned different opinions, reactions, and readings. There is so much explicit narrative dissonance, Frank Laurence observes, that "Nothing after the opening minutes [seems] much like Hemingway's material."<sup>36</sup> For Kawin, Harry changed markedly with each writer's treatment: Hemingway's Harry was, among other things, "an unsentimental killer, an individualist ground to death by giant forces, a loser"; Furthman's a "tough adventurer"; Faulkner's a "sometime misogynist"; and Hawks's a "witty and self-confident professional."<sup>37</sup> Bogart's Harry melds these personalities. He embodies the typical Hemingway hero in his tough, cynical personality and has some contempt for women, as when he fears that both Marie and Helene will interfere in his clandestine political activities for the De Gaullists. For Mimi Reisel Gladstein, though, "Bogart's

33. Faulkner and Furthman, 18–19.

34. *Ibid.*, 31.

35. *Ibid.*, 32.

36. Laurence, 84.

37. Faulkner and Furthman, 12.

Harry seems to have walked straight from Hemingway's pages," given how "[b]oth Harrys value courage, competence, and loyalty to comrades" and how "Bogart [ . . . ] fits nicely into the Hemingway code-hero mold."<sup>38</sup> The film's Harry exudes masculine toughness when he shoots Captain Renard's bodyguard and then single-handedly fights and subdues both Renard and Lieutenant Coyo. His wittiness and self-confidence imbue his interactions with Marie (asking her "Why did you do that?" after she kisses him) and Renard (asking "Did you ever whip anybody with a pistol?" before pistol-whipping him).<sup>39</sup>

There are other differences between the versions of Harry. Hemingway's is seriously wounded in a gunfight with rum-running Cubans; the loss of his arm symbolically suggests the emotional vulnerability, loss, and anxiety that he represses as a Code Hero. In the film, his role as wounded patient reverses that of doctor when he removes a bullet from Paul's right shoulder. Because Harry does not lose his arm in the film, he maintains a tough physical demeanor, qualities that Hawks and Faulkner wanted Bogart to portray. Most importantly, Harry's fate at the end is radically different. In the novel, he dies slowly aboard his ship after being shot by another Cuban radical. Although Harry knows that the Cubans are going to try to kill him, he takes the job out of financial necessity. In the film, he escapes to Devil's Island with Marie and Eddy after killing Renard's bodyguard, an optimism countering the book's pessimism, such as when Marie laments the loss of her husband and must learn to live as a widow.

Clearly, the shift in locale did not necessitate changing Harry's fate; French revolutionaries could just as easily have killed him aboard his own boat. It seems that Hawks, not Faulkner, chose not to kill Harry. As early as October 1943, the Temporary Screenplay (by Hawks and Furthman) had altered Harry's fate, when the film was still set in Cuba: "Hawks had a temperamental objection to stories about, as he put it, losers."<sup>40</sup> When Faulkner began his work on the project in early 1944, Hawks had established this primary element of the script. Though Hemingway's Harry would say, "No matter how a man alone ain't got no bloody fucking chance,"<sup>41</sup> Bogart's Harry cooperates with Marie, Eddy, and Gerard to escape Martinique. The latter Harry not only lives but also realizes that can succeed because he is not alone. That the film is both adaptation and prologue—what we can term an *adaptation-*

38. Gladstein, "Hemingway, Faulkner, and Hawks," 180. See also Kathleen Murray's "To Have and Have Not: An Adaptive System," in *True to the Spirit: Film Adaptation and the Question of Fidelity*, eds. Colin MacCabe, Kathleen Murray, and Rick Warner (Oxford and New York: Oxford UP, 2011), 91–113.

39. Faulkner and Furthman, 119, 177.

40. *Ibid.*, 26.

41. Hemingway, *To Have and Have Not*, 225.

*as-prologue*—would necessitate keeping Harry alive. An episode in Harry and Marie's early life, the film's narrative ultimately "does maintain fidelity to Hemingway in terms of characterization, style, and theme" as Gladstein posits more in terms of fidelity of spirit, character, and theme than of plot.<sup>42</sup>

Because the script—exemplifying Richard Dyer's notion of star discourse—devotes more screen time to Bogart and Bacall together,<sup>43</sup> it shifts the focus away from Harry as a rugged individualist and toward Harry as a member of a collective that includes Marie, Eddy, and Gerard. The Faulkner-Hawks Second Revised Final screenplay significantly expands Marie's role. The viewer sees much more interaction, particularly Hollywoodized romance, between Harry and Marie than does the reader. At this pre-novel stage of their lives, Harry and Marie are not yet married.<sup>44</sup> Although the film's Harry still stands out because of Bogart's star power and Hemingwayesque demeanor, Faulkner and Hawks made Harry less of a loner, straying significantly from his place in a long line of Hemingway's strong individualists: Nick Adams, Jake Barnes, and Frederic Henry, among others. The novel's Harry was convinced that "a man alone ain't got no bloody fucking chance" and acted accordingly; the film's Harry diverges from this mantra and, consequently, from Hemingway's original treatment of him. Many of Faulkner's characters, by contrast, are ensconced in the history and community of Yoknapatawpha County, hence his primary focus on families in his fiction—the McCaslins, Snopeses, and others—rather than individuals. Although Faulkner did isolate family members or outsiders for individual treatment (such as Quentin Compson or Joe Christmas), his loners are most often seen as part of a larger collective, be it a family or the community itself. In contrast, Hemingway's Harry may be part of a family and of the Key West and Cuban communities, but he is ultimately his own man. Hawks and Faulkner had their own character model that they thought more commercially viable than Hemingway's. Director and co-screenwriter turned away from the source text's Harry and offered what they saw as a superior version, mobilizing Bogart's image and celebrity to draw a more compelling, marketable character.

Consistent with such key changes to Harry's character, much of the film's dialogue is different, due in part to the shift to Martinique and to the new characters. When he began his revisions, Faulkner wrote more to his own

42. Gladstein, "Hemingway, Faulkner, and Hawks," 174.

43. For a more in-depth discussion of this construct and its cultural significance, see such works as Dyer's *Heavenly Bodies: Film Stars and Society* (2nd ed., 2004) and Thomas Leitch's *Film Adaptation and Its Discontents: From Gone with the Wind to The Passion of the Christ* (2007).

44. Faulkner and Furthman, 34–35.

model of dialogue, thus imposing his different—and better, he may have thought—standards on Hemingway's work. Hawks trimmed such verbose passages so the actors could memorize their lines more easily and deliver them in ways more in keeping with viewers' expectations. Faulkner's more filmically appropriate dialogue was also more attuned to Hemingway's style. Despite the similarities in the style of dialogue, we see some key differences in its content throughout the film, such as when the revolutionaries are trying to charter Harry's boat at the beginning. In the novel,

"Don't make me feel bad," I told him. "I tell you true I can't do it."  
 "Afterwards, when things are changed, it would mean a good deal to you."  
 "I know it. I'm all for you. But I can't do it."  
 [ . . . . ]  
 "Listen," I said. "I don't care who is President here. But I don't carry anything to the States that can talk."  
 "You mean we would talk?" one of them who hadn't spoke said. He was angry.  
 [ . . . . ]  
 "Listen," I told him. "Don't be so tough so early in the morning. I'm sure you've cut plenty people's throats. I haven't even had my coffee yet."<sup>45</sup>

In typical Hemingway fashion, Harry is not intimidated by the three Cubans, twice implores one of them not to act so "tough," and implies that their threats are largely unimportant. As a rumrunner and Code Hero, Harry upholds his personal rules to not bring human cargo aboard his ship and to not be threatened by the Cubans. The mood of this scene suggests that a fight could break out at any moment between Harry and the Cubans, though their sparring is only verbal. This tense exchange is followed by one of the Cubans saying that he "would like to kill" Harry before they leave;<sup>46</sup> the Cubans are soon killed in a firefight outside. As this scene implies, Harry's Havana is a volatile, violent place with a marked criminal element.

Faulkner and Hawks's version of this scene resembles Hemingway's, but the underlying tone and verbal exchanges vary. This scene is placed differently in each version as well: it is the opening scene of the novel, but it begins well into the screenplay, calling for Bogart to stray from Hemingway's character in a more drawn-out scene:

GERARD: They only want to use your ship for one night. They will pay you

45. Hemingway, *To Have and Have Not*, 3–5.

46. *Ibid.*, 5.

very well, too. Of course, nothing like you would get from Americans.  
 MORGAN (shaking head): I'd like to oblige you, Frenchy, but I can't afford to get mixed up in local politics.  
 GERARD: It is a very urgent matter. Afterwards, when things are different, it would be very good for you, Harry.

This exchange picks up a few scenes later, after Gerard has introduced the three men to Morgan:

MORGAN: I'm sorry, boys—but I can't do it.  
 BEAUCLERC: We will give you twenty-five hundred francs.  
 MORGAN: That's fifty dollars in American money. I can't do it.  
 DE GAULLIST NO. 1: A thousand francs a piece. (Morgan shakes his head.) It is only a little voyage to a place about forty kilometers from here.  
 BEAUCLERC: We would give you more money—but we haven't got it.  
 MORGAN: Don't make me feel bad. I tell you true I can't do it.  
 DE GAULLIST NO. 2: Afterwards, when things are changed, it would mean a good deal to you.  
 [ . . . ]  
 MORGAN: Listen, I don't care who runs France or Martinique. Or who wants to. Please get somebody else.<sup>47</sup>

In the film, Marie is present though marginalized in this scene; in the book, she had not been introduced when Harry meets with the Cubans. Bogart's Harry has a light-hearted, humorous side (calling them "Frenchy"), whereas Hemingway's is serious and resilient. Some of Bogart's dialogue resembles the book's ("Don't make me feel bad"; "I tell you true I can't do it"; "I don't care who"), but his and the De Gaullists' demeanors differ from their novelistic counterparts. There is a sense of urgency in both versions, but there is neither the threat of violence nor the "tough" undertones of Morgan's and the Cubans' words. Rather, the De Gaullists are almost desperately polite when seeking Morgan's services, and there is no threat of a fight.

This is not the only veering from the source novel. The shift to Martinique and to different political conflicts necessitated changing what its characters say about their revolution. Hemingway's Harry thinks about his contempt for Cuba's political turmoil:

What the hell do I care about his revolution. F—— his revolution. [ . . . ] It's the Cubans run Cuba. They all double cross each other. They sell each other

47. Faulkner and Furthman, 85, 93–96.



out. They get what they deserve. The hell with their revolutions. All I got to do is make a living for my family and I can't do that. Then he tells me about his revolution. The hell with his revolution.<sup>48</sup>

This passage is replete with Hemingway's stylistic repetition—"revolution(s)," "hell"—and shows a bitter, angry Harry. He is disillusioned by the Cubans' political conflicts and cares only about his family's needs. Bogart's Harry is still somewhat critical of the De Gaullists' efforts, but he is less angry. While on his ship with Eddy, Paul, and Helene, we see Morgan's sarcastic, even misogynistic side, as Paul introduces Helene:

MORGAN: I don't care what she is. What did you want to bring your wife here for? What kind of a war are you guys fighting, lugging your wives around with you?

HELENE (bristling): What business is it of yours?

MORGAN: An American, huh? Well, nothing like a little cheesecake for a touch of color. How come you didn't bring along a photographer?

[ . . . ]

[They are then approached by a patrol boat.] PAUL: We surrender. Don't—

[ . . . ]

MORGAN: So that's how you're saving France—by surrendering to the first Vichy cop that yells "Stop" at you.

PAUL (weakly [because he has been shot]): Please do as I say. It is for the best.

MORGAN (to Helene): You see what happens when you lug women around? (Pointing to Paul.) Get him off the seat. He's bleeding all over my cushion.

HELENE: What kind of a man are you—talking about your silly cushion? Why don't you do something for him?

MORGAN (as he goes forward): I haven't got time right now.<sup>49</sup>

This is as close as Harry gets in the film to being overtly critical of radical activities. His words may be acidic, but he does not become angry enough to curse, due largely to industry rules against cursing but consistent with his toned-down character. Another key difference is how Morgan criticizes each revolution. His thoughts in the book are unspoken and reveal an inner conflict between his ideals, sense of self, and financial needs. In the film, his thoughts become acerbic dialogue expressing his misogynistic tendencies

48. Hemingway, *To Have and Have Not*, 168.

49. Faulkner and Furthman, 136–40.

(that women get in the way and must be “lugged” around), his protective impulse toward Paul and Helene, and his displeasure at Paul.<sup>50</sup>

As he did in *The Wild Palms*, Faulkner played a role in adapting Hemingway’s material. That much of Hemingway’s source text was recast in the screenplay reveals their personal disparities. Financially, the authors made their money from the film differently: Hemingway, as always, sold the rights to the film and did no adaptive work; Faulkner, always Hemingway’s economic inferior, needed whatever money Warner Brothers could pay him. Faulkner often had an intense “anxiety about money”; he had to support an ever-growing family, write fiction that did not sell especially well, publish stories in popular magazines, and collaborate on screenplays.<sup>51</sup> This originated in the “quite extraordinary level of social and material obligation he had imposed upon himself” since the early 1930s, namely, Estelle, Jill, and Victoria and Malcolm (his stepchildren); his domestic servants, widowed sister-in-law and niece, and other dependents; and Rowan Oak, Greenfield Farm, and Bailey’s Woods.<sup>52</sup> Such domestic responsibility enabled Faulkner’s paterfamilias role but led to debt, which Faulkner listed in “a small book with alphabetized pages bearing the names of all his creditors and the amounts he owed them.”<sup>53</sup> Arguably at the height of his powers in the mid-1930s and early 1940s, Faulkner was “disenchanted with writing for hire, yet incapable of supporting himself and his family by writing only serious fiction,” anxieties woven into *The Wild Palms* as I have discussed in Chapter 2.<sup>54</sup> His “need for the privacy to write and his growing public reputation” in the mid-1930s pulled him away from his creative work and “slowed” his writing’s “explosive pace” in the 1940s. He was “caught between his reputation as a writer of great power and the base need to earn money by capitalizing on that,” perhaps more so than Hemingway felt himself to be.<sup>55</sup>

These economic differences speak to Faulkner’s and Hemingway’s broader writerly roles. Both were established artists. Hemingway was always more successful financially while Faulkner often felt himself more successful artistically, thus making the more famous Hemingway somewhat insecure about his artistic prominence and the more literary-minded Faulkner some-

50. Marie’s sardonic “You know how to whistle, don’t you, Steve? You just put your lips together and blow” (20)—possibly the film’s most famous line—was not in the novel; this and others give Marie an added edginess. We can attribute this line to Hawks, who oversaw Bacall’s screen test; she spoke this line in her screen test, which was shot in January 1944 (18–19). Faulkner did not begin working on the screenplay until that February.

51. Zender, 50.

52. *Ibid.*, 67.

53. Blotner, *Faulkner*, 440.

54. Zender, 61.

55. Watson, 139–40.

what insecure about his financial placement. His economic woes persisted until the late 1940s, when the sales and film rights for *Intruder in the Dust* and \$30,000 Nobel Prize award provided long-sought financial security. Yet, Faulkner was on economic tenterhooks while working on *To Have and Have Not*, hence his taking on several screenwriting projects at the time. "If he had had money enough like Hemingway," Blotner observes, "he would never have touched a Hollywood film script."<sup>56</sup>

That Faulkner helped rewrite Hemingway's novel for a different medium illustrates how two different aesthetic visions came into contact, with that of the former taking precedence. The dramatically different portrayal of Harry best demonstrates which vision won out in the film. To an extent, the new Harry enabled Hawks and Faulkner to apply different standards of characterization to Hemingway, just as Hemingway himself applied his own aesthetic model to Faulkner by choosing "Turn About" for *Men at War*. Faulkner and Hawks followed Hollywood ideals of characterization that necessitated changing the personality and fate of Hemingway's protagonist. Of course, Hawks was not the one in competition with Hemingway. Faulkner must have taken special interest in reinterpreting the novel, because a film with the star power of Bogart and Bacall featuring his own name in the writing credits could boost his professional self-confidence. Perhaps Faulkner thought that his work in writing a potentially famous film starring a famous Hollywood couple would make his and Hawks's film more memorable than Hemingway's novel, thus calling attention to his role in improving the work of his principal rival. However, Gladstein notes that the Hemingway name was the primary selling point for the film; its opening credits and voiceover proclaim the story as a tale of danger and violence invoking "the image of the adventuresome writer." Faulkner and Furthman are acknowledged as screenwriters in the opening credits, but the former's name recognition was not nearly as impactful as the author of the source novel.<sup>57</sup>

The Faulkner-Hawks adaptation of *To Have and Have Not* echoes Faulkner's borrowing and revision of Hemingway's work into *The Wild Palms*. He reshaped Hemingway's words, images, locales, and ideas—aggressive Cuban insurgents in Cuba became anxious French De Gaullists in Martinique, Harry's arm wound was transferred to Paul, Harry does not die, and Marie is more prominent, along with related additions and reimaginings. In a modernist sense, the screenplay "works by stylistic montage," as *The Waste Land*, Toomer's *Cane* (1923), some of Dos Passos's work, and other texts incorporated multiple sources and intratexts.<sup>58</sup> Although Faulkner's screen-

56. Blotner, *Faulkner*, 447.

57. Gladstein, "Hemingway, Faulkner, and Hawks," 173.

58. Brown, 101.

play is radically different from Eliot's poem or Dos Passos's hybridity, these texts operated on a similar principle: conscious exchange with other works of art can lead to "the creation of a new poem" that is figuratively coauthored.<sup>59</sup> The two versions of *To Have and Have Not* are thus interdependent—we cannot fully appreciate the changes that Faulkner, Hawks, and Furthman made without revisiting Hemingway's novel, as with *The Wild Palms* and the Hemingway texts it recasts. Despite its sharp contrast with the novel, the adaptation unites the authors textually and, more so, circumstantially. As co-screenwriter, Faulkner helped reimagine Hemingway's novel; in the making of the film, they were able "to meet, although not in person," creating "an amalgam" of mutually influential rivals with modernistic roots.<sup>60</sup>

"One of the small paradoxes here," Gladstein aptly notes, "is how Faulkner, noted for a reticulated style almost diametrically opposite to Hemingway's spare prose, should so effectively assume the Hemingway voice."<sup>61</sup> Having enacted a similar assumption of a distinctive voice in *The Wild Palms* half a decade earlier, Faulkner again followed the aesthetic of reiving that pervades much of his work, as Joseph Urgo has persuasively described. Faulkner's contribution to the adaptation of *To Have and Have Not* thus suggests but does not imitate *The Wild Palms*. He wrote the former independently but the latter collaboratively with Furthman's screenplay and Hawks's regular input, and for a different medium with a larger audience. While Faulkner himself decided to riff sharply on Hemingway in his novel, he did not choose to shift the setting of the film from Cuba to Martinique, nor did he let Harry survive—Hawks had made these and other key decisions when Faulkner began the project. Faulkner only had a say in the film's plot, structure, and characterization (dialogue, development, and interaction), whereas he himself plotted, structured, and characterized his earlier novel. His work with Hawks and Furthman notwithstanding, Faulkner was an important player in adapting Hemingway's work. He rewrote much of the dialogue for Bogart, Bacall, and their supporting cast, and he helped change the setting and socio-political atmosphere, perhaps making the story more noteworthy and socio-politically accurate. Hawks's motivations were manifold: the film industry's standards (providing a definitive, positive Hollywood ending), the government's insistence (switching from Cuba to French Martinique), and his own visions of characterization (a less isolated, more heroic Harry; an expanded view of Marie and her early relationship with Harry). Closely involved with this project, Faulkner must have been piqued by the prospect of rearranging and rewriting a novel that had "sold better than any other Hemingway book

59. Ibid., 102.

60. Faulkner and Furthman, 53; Gladstein, "Hemingway, Faulkner, and Hawks," 173.

61. Gladstein, "Hemingway, Faulkner, and Hawks," 174.

published" in the 1930s, some 39,038 copies.<sup>62</sup> By helping Hawks finish a screenplay that Furthman and Hawks had begun, he indirectly collaborated with Hemingway, though rewriting—and potentially improving—his words, characters, and plot. While the parts that Bogart and Bacall played diverged from Hemingway's treatment, the film embodies a figurative connection between competing authors, one, like *The Wild Palms*, articulated more in Faulkner's terms.

### SPARRING "IN THE SAME RUNNING FIELD"

After the anthology and film—relatively tame by the authors' competitive grammar—there would be a more biting intertextuality in the authors' letters, which also began revealing a joint psychological and professional awareness. As their rivalry escalated in the late 1940s, letters became a clear, if largely indirect, line of debate between Faulkner and Hemingway, embodying various tones—admiration, mutual respect, harsh judgment, one-upmanship, and personal-professional anxiety. Both authors indirectly traded commentary through other writers and critics, primarily Malcolm Cowley and Harvey Breit, while revealing some psychocompetitive sway. In letters from the 1940s and 1950s specifically, as Faulkner won numerous awards and published more books, Hemingway recognized his significance, felt a level of anxiety, and made numerous (some quite humorous) criticisms to downplay his impact. They often lauded and belittled one another in their correspondence, sometimes in the same letter, consistent with their tendency to praise one another guardedly.

In *The Faulkner-Cowley File*, Cowley describes "the argument at a distance between Faulkner and Hemingway," noting that it "sometimes became embittered on Hemingway's part."<sup>63</sup> Cowley's regular correspondence with them and close reading of their work showed him several intersections: their "sharp eyes for landscape," being "hunters by devoted avocation," and examining "the primitive mind, the mystical union of hunter and hunted, the obsessions of wounded men, and the praise of alcohol" in their fiction.<sup>64</sup> Cowley was aware that Faulkner and Hemingway, as they rived each other, were also attuned; he suggested to both men more than once that they exchange letters. Although they ignored his advice, Cowley was an important presence, due to his admiration for both men as artists and to his role as a kind of conduit between them. Because both men framed each other as

62. Trogdon, 185.

63. Cowley, *The Faulkner-Cowley File*, 159.

64. *Ibid.*, 159–60.

competitors, their rivalry seemingly trumped their respect for Cowley, and the authors seemed content to have no social relationship, only a tense inter-textual one that increasingly played out in correspondence with others.

Between 1945 and 1949, Hemingway mentioned Faulkner in at least three letters to Cowley, who had edited *The Portable Hemingway* in 1944. Writing from the Finca on September 3, 1945, he discussed the state of writing, which

is a very lonely trade and with Scott dead and John Bishop dead and have-ing quarrelled with Dos (as necessary *then* as was the civil war; but an awful bore to have quarrelled with some one it was always fun to talk with after war) [ . . . ].

[ . . . . ]

Malcolm I hope you are happy and haveing a good life. I appreciated very much you takeing the time to reconsider what we have tried to do and are still trying to do; only better. Trouble is most of the guys dead and I know there will be wonderful new ones but we do not know them yet. Faulkner has the most talent of anybody but hard to depend on because he goes on writing after he is tired and seems as though he never threw away the worthless. I would have been happy just to have managed him.<sup>65</sup>

On October 17, Hemingway again wrote to Cowley and elaborated on his views on Faulkner's professional struggles and, as he saw it, uncontrolled abilities:

I'd no idea Faulkner was in that bad shape and very happy you are putting together the Portable of him. He has the most talent of anybody and he just needs a sort of conscience that isn't there. Certainly if no nation can exist half free and half slave no man can write half whore and half straight. But he will write absolutely perfectly straight and then go on and on and not be able to end it. I wish the christ I owned him like you'd own a horse and train him like a horse and race him like a horse—only in writing. How beautifully he can write and as simple and as complicated as autumn or as spring.<sup>66</sup>

Despite his reservations about Faulkner's lack of artistic discipline, an uneasy mix of jealousy, admiration, and intimidation is clear. Faulkner may have "the most talent" and write "beautifully," but Hemingway feels that

65. Hemingway, Letter to Malcolm Cowley, September 3, 1945. ©2012 Printed with the permission of The Ernest Hemingway Foundation.

66. Hemingway, *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters*, 603–4.

he could "train" him to write even better than he already does. Playing the part of literary critic as he did in *Men at War* and numerous other venues, Hemingway acknowledges Faulkner's talent but then suggests that he could guide him to improve his writing—there was always a "but" in their positive comments about each other. This treatment of Faulkner can recall Hemingway's patronizing criticism of Fitzgerald in *A Moveable Feast*. Although he respected Fitzgerald as an author and friend, Hemingway criticized him for wasting his talent by his lack of discipline, by "whoring" in Hollywood and publishing in popular magazines, and by being too committed to Zelda. Hemingway leaves Estelle out of his critical-complimentary portrait of Faulkner, but his mixed, even hesitant praise squares with his treatment of Fitzgerald and other authors *qua* competitors.

In a *New York Post Week-End Magazine* article, "They Call Him Papa" (December 28, 1946), interviewer Mary Harrington talked to Hemingway about his fellow writers: "And he disagrees with the critics who call him the greatest living American writer. History will probably prove him wrong, but he'll take Faulkner any day, he says. 'William Faulkner is the best living,' he says. 'And Nelson Algren.'" <sup>67</sup> A year before Faulkner would offer a different order of "the greatest living" writers, Hemingway elevates him above their milieu, but more than a little disingenuously given the harsh statements he had made and would make in other forums. And, in an October 1949 letter to Cowley, Hemingway again linked Faulkner to Algren: "He has everything that the fading Faulkner ever had except the talent for magic."<sup>68</sup> His past criticisms aside, Hemingway seemed to appreciate Faulkner's "magic," just as he ostensibly admired Fitzgerald while criticizing him.

However, most of Hemingway's positive comments about Faulkner were given with some proviso. He is magical yet "fading," he has much "talent" but no "conscience" and is "hard to depend on" and, as such, presumably needs Hemingway's help. This conditional praise is rooted in Hemingway's strong competitive ego, one increasingly concerned with Faulkner since the early 1930s. In the above letters and comments, Hemingway does not specify Faulkner texts that seem to him endless and undisciplined, but he has clearly read his work. In writing to one of the era's preeminent critics, Hemingway tried to establish himself as an authority on American fiction, just as his inclusion of a comparatively pedestrian Faulkner story in *Men at War* made his own work look better. During the 1940s, Cowley became a sounding board for Hemingway's ideas about old and new writers and what he saw as a "lonely trade." Hemingway knew that Cowley respected Faulkner. Yet, he

67. Qtd. in Bruccoli, *Conversations with Ernest Hemingway*, 44.

68. Hemingway, *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters*, 681.

worried that Faulkner was a more creative artist, despite his own stronger publicity. Hemingway's comments imply that Faulkner's writing would be better if it were more controlled, concise, and Hemingway-esque, an act ostensibly distancing himself from yet bringing him nearer to his psychologically influential rival.

Faulkner also corresponded with Cowley, who first wrote him in 1944 to ask for information about an essay he was planning to write. This essay eventually turned into his introduction to *The Portable Faulkner*, which Cowley edited and which helped recapture Faulkner's broader critical acclaim. Their correspondence lasted sporadically into the 1950s; Hemingway's name surfaced in their letters, often in conjunction with the same reserved praise that Faulkner's name evoked in Hemingway's letters to Cowley. On September 17, 1945, Cowley noted how Hemingway had praised him, referencing the September 3 letter above:

Did I tell you the story I heard from Sartre, about Hemingway drunk in Paris insisting that Faulkner was better than he was? Hemingway wrote me a long, rambling, lonely letter complaining that writing was a lonely trade and there was no one to talk to about it. He said about you, "Faulkner has the most talent of anybody but hard to depend on because he goes on writing after he is tired and seems as though he never threw away the worthless. I would have been happy just to have managed him." Hemingway would be a good manager, too—he knows how to say exactly what he feels and set a high price on it. But just now he seems to be very lonely and unhappy [ . . . ] and if you're not corresponding with him already, it would be nice if you sat down some time and wrote him.<sup>69</sup>

Faulkner replied on September 20:

I'll write to Hemingway. Poor bloke, to have to marry three times to find out that marriage is a failure, and the only way to get any peace out of it is (if you are fool enough to marry at all) keep the first one and stay as far away from her as much as you can, with the hope of some day outliving her. At least you will be safe then from any other one marrying you—which is bound to happen if you ever divorce her. Apparently man can be cured of drugs, drink, gambling, biting his nails and picking his nose, but not of marrying.<sup>70</sup>

Having marital problems of his own—namely, his alcoholism and affair with Meta—Faulkner ostensibly empathized with the "lonely" Hemingway's

69. Cowley, *The Faulkner-Cowley File*, 29.

70. Faulkner, *Selected Letters of William Faulkner*, 203.



domestic problems. Apparently, he did not think that Hemingway would be a good "manager," because he never acknowledges the statement, nor mentions Hemingway's writing. Such an omission manifests his competitiveness and points toward some of Hemingway's psychological influence. This episode is one of several showing how "Faulkner swung wildly between the poles of overconfidence and a feeling of failure" and wariness, as Hemingway had, too.<sup>71</sup> Faulkner seems confident enough artistically that he saw no need to be managed by Hemingway, yet his desire to eclipse him indicates a related desire to avoid social contact with such a worthy, equally canonized writer whose fame and wealth were markedly brighter than his own.

*The Portable Faulkner* created a potential connection between the authors, because it had been suggested at Random House that Hemingway write its introduction. Both Cowley and Faulkner objected to Robert Linscott, then Senior Editor. Cowley wrote Linscott on February 12, 1946, to suggest Conrad Aiken, Kay Boyle, and Jean-Paul Sartre as better candidates: "an introduction by [Hemingway] might be in dubious taste—but he has a lot to say about Faulkner, mostly on the credit side."<sup>72</sup> Faulkner wrote to Linscott on March 22:

I am opposed to asking Hemingway to write the preface. It seems to me in bad taste to ask him to write a preface to my stuff. It's like asking one race horse in the middle of a race to broadcast a blurb on another horse in the same running field. A preface should be done by a preface writer, not a fictioneer; certainly not by one man on another in his own limited field. This sort of mutual back-scratching reduces novelists and poets to the status of a kind of eunuch-capon pampered creatures in some spiritual Vanderbilt stables, mindless, possessing nothing save the ability and willingness to run their hearts out at the drop of Vanderbilt's hat.

The woods are full of people who like to make a nickel expressing opinions on the work of novelists. Cant you get one of them?<sup>73</sup>

Faulkner respected Hemingway but seemed to like the social distance keeping them at arm's—or text's—length. As Hemingway would do more astringently in the 1950s, Faulkner links writing and gender, noting that the positive public commentary associated with an introduction would be analogous to making a (male) writer into an ineffectual, eunuch-like figure, one slavishly faithful to someone else. He also continues the use of equine metaphors but makes no mention of Hemingway's letter to Cowley from

71. Parini, 296.

72. Cowley, *The Faulkner-Cowley File*, 87.

73. Faulkner, *Selected Letters of William Faulkner*, 229–30.

the previous October. Their racehorse metaphors connote that Faulkner and Hemingway saw themselves to be in an artistic match race—one on one, winner take all, but without “expressing [positive] opinions.”

In the earlier letter to Cowley, Hemingway temporarily displaced his competitiveness and saw Faulkner as a horse in need of management and training, whereas, in his letter to Linscott, Faulkner saw Hemingway as a horse against which he was racing. Although Hemingway generally took their *mano a mano* contest more seriously than Faulkner did, their roles are more equivalent with this common horseracing metaphor. Random House soon dropped the idea of Hemingway’s writing the introduction; Cowley eventually wrote it, creating a key document in early Faulkner criticism. The collection, as we know, helped revive Faulkner’s reputation, brought many of his books back into print in hardcover, and strengthened his creative drive. Faulkner doubtless did not want to share the recaptured spotlight with Hemingway. Both before and after the *Portable*, he had significant financial and personal problems, and bringing Hemingway into the equation would possibly have split the critics’ focus.

After *The Portable Faulkner*, Cowley kept up his correspondence with both authors. In the spring of 1948, *Life* commissioned him to write a short biographical essay on Hemingway. He and his family flew to Havana on March 7; Cowley talked with Hemingway about his past, his work, and his family. Eagerly embracing his role as an intermediary between such major figures, Cowley provided Faulkner with a brief report on July 20, 1948:

Hemingway loves being a great man, it’s something he needs and demands, and nobody begrudges it to him because he keeps paying for it at every moment in terms of kindness and attention and thoughtfulness to anyone around him. [ . . . ] It’s a curious life for a writer [ . . . ] and Hemingway is a curious and very likeable person and drinks enough to put almost anyone else in the alcoholic ward—then spends much of the night reading because he can’t sleep and goes to work in the morning on the big novel he’s had around for seven or eight years and doesn’t know when he’ll finish; [ . . . ] You would stifle and go crazy in the mob that surrounds him.<sup>74</sup>

This letter borders on literary gossip about Hemingway’s drinking and writing troubles but shows Cowley trying to give Faulkner a window into his life and shape the images of the authors as his own critical work did. Though he does not tell Faulkner to write to Hemingway, he still attempts to put them in communication. According to Cowley, Faulkner never responded to

74. Cowley, *The Faulkner–Cowley File*, 100–101.

this letter, so we may not know for sure what he thought about Hemingway's alcoholism, writer's block, and finances—perhaps a modicum of empathy, given his similar creative troubles; perhaps gratitude, given that he had no such regular "mob" in Oxford.

After Cowley's *Life* profile of Hemingway was published in January 1949, he wanted to write a similar one of Faulkner—who felt differently, as a February 11 letter indicates:

I saw the LIFE with your Hemingway piece. I didn't read it but I know it's all right or you wouldn't have put your name on it; for which reason I know Hemingway thinks it's all right and I hope it will profit him—if there is any profit or increase or increment that a brave man and an artist can lack or need or want.

But I am more convinced and determined than ever that this is not for me. I will protest to the last: no photographs, no recorded documents. It is my ambition to be, as a private individual, abolished and voided from history, leaving it markless, no refuse save the printed books; I wish I had had enough sense to see ahead thirty years ago and, like some of the Elizabethans, not signed them. It is my aim, and every effort bent, that the sum and history of my life, which in the same sentence is my obit and epitaph too, shall be them both: He made the books and he died.<sup>75</sup>

Unwilling to sacrifice his privacy to *Life*—or any periodical—Faulkner preferred directing his artistic energy toward his fiction, advocating an almost anti-*author* image here. He, of course, "made" a few more books and won a few more major awards before "he died," but with some public exposure. He is hopeful, even happy, for his "brave" coeval, whose presence was ubiquitous in the public sphere, often due to Hemingway's own efforts. Still, Faulkner demarcates them, as he claims not to have read the *Life* piece. Whether he had, these authors typically read anything they could by or about each other. By not (admitting to?) reading the *Life* profile, Faulkner may have been trying to veil some unease concerning Hemingway's greater fame, wealth, and cultural attention. This implicit financial self-doubt counterbalanced his own vast artistic accomplishments, which can be said to have eclipsed Hemingway's. Always a more private figure, he tried separating himself from Hemingway's psychological impact: he implies here that he focused almost solely on his own writing, while Hemingway focused on writing and publicity. At this point, Faulkner seems to have thought it better for himself as an author to be known for his work, not for publicity, photographs, and pro-

75. Faulkner, *Selected Letters of William Faulkner*, 285.

files in popular magazines. This was “an admirable wish, and one unfamiliar in most literary circles, where self-promotion has tended (in the modern era) to run rampant—in part *because* of Hemingway’s egregious example.” “Faulkner may also have rejected the idea of another profile,” Parini continues, “because he hated the inevitable comparison to Hemingway.”<sup>76</sup> He may have “hated” being linked to a writer whose style so differed from his own, but he was often eager to compare himself to Hemingway favorably and rank himself above his peers, at least privately. Or so he thought.

### BROTHERS SHOOTING IT OUT

Two years before his comments about a *Life* profile, Faulkner’s perception of his own stronger writing informed the ranking he offered at the University of Mississippi in April 1947 about Hemingway (4th) being inferior to Wolfe (1st), himself (2nd), and Dos Passos (3rd). After Faulkner’s remarks were publicized, the fourth-best writer reacted to the perceived skepticism about his masculine courage. In a marked role reversal, Faulkner was the aggressor, Hemingway the target. His ostensibly impromptu comments about Hemingway, their guarded responses, Faulkner’s later comments, and his subtly disparaging Hemingway are the summa of their dialectic. Never before had they communicated directly, nor would they ever do so, judging by the known correspondence. Faulkner’s ranking reverberated: he and Hemingway wrote each other afterwards; he tried to clarify his standards while insisting on his placement’s accuracy and implying his own superiority; and, his ranking resounded loudly in Hemingway’s mind.

Between April 14 and 17, Faulkner conducted six question-and-answer sessions with upper-level students at the University of Mississippi, an early version of the writer-as-academic role he would embody more fully at the University of Virginia a decade later. As Oxford’s most famous native son, Faulkner returned to the university—where he was briefly a student after the First World War—to share his knowledge and experiences. In debt and, consequently, in Hollywood for much of the decade, Faulkner agreed to these class conferences partly for economic reasons. Ole Miss paid him \$250 for the six sessions, and his involvement with the university was likely a way of promoting Ole Miss.<sup>77</sup> He was assured that students would not be allowed to take notes and that professors would not be present; he used these meetings to discuss writing, past and present authors (e.g., Joyce and Anderson), his own work, and his personal war fictions (still thought to be true). It all

76. Parini, 307.

77. Blotner, *Faulkner*, 481.

seemed innocent enough; he just wanted to make some money and help out the English Department of the adopted alma mater he attended sporadically in the 1920s. Despite the agreement, students took notes, faculty were present, and Faulkner's comments eventually reached an audience much larger than a handful of English majors and professors. Marvin Black, then Ole Miss's public relations director, wrote a press release summarizing Faulkner's various comments, including his list and his claim that Hemingway "has no courage, has never crawled out on a limb." Black's release ran in the May 11 New York *Herald Tribune*, which Hemingway eventually received in Cuba.<sup>78</sup> This occurrence—perhaps an oversight, or Black's inability to resist such promising gossip between literary heavyweights—bore the direct, tense communication between Faulkner and Hemingway.

While the ranking was not the kind of *ad hominem* attack Hemingway would eagerly direct his way in the 1950s, it demonstrated Faulkner's competitiveness and felt influence. Having dueled with Hemingway since the 1930s, Faulkner must have known that Hemingway would answer his remarks harshly and combatively, no matter how private or unintentionally provocative they seemed to him. Whereas Faulkner was never as stridently competitive as Hemingway, he was rather strong-willed and confident. His persona did not have the cultural reach or appearance of masculine bravado of Hemingway's; Faulkner's was of a more provincial, genteel tenor, revealing him as more of a creative than an active writer. Nevertheless, he wanted exemplary professional acclaim and masculinity, which surely contributed to the "curious episode" that

illuminated [ . . . ] his egoism, his need for personal aggrandizement, his depreciation of the man competing with him for the Nobel Prize. If we read between the lines—and Faulkner did not explain why he had made the rankings nor did he pull back from their "veracity"—we see a writer desperate for attention and fame, even while fighting against the release of publicity materials.<sup>79</sup>

In some respects, this was "a basically unfair assessment of Hemingway" downplaying his "equally adventurous foray into literature."<sup>80</sup> Moreover, "[h]aving struck a nerve, Faulkner never took anything back. Even his public praise for some of Hemingway's work [ . . . ] did not address, let alone erase, the charge first leveled in 1947 and voiced numerous times thereafter."<sup>81</sup> Karl and Monteiro rightly note that Faulkner never withdrew his suggestion of

78. *Ibid.*, 483.

79. Karl, 759.

80. *Ibid.*, 758.

81. Monteiro, "The Faulkner–Hemingway Rivalry," 86.

his superiority, or of Hemingway's inadequate risk-taking. He would only apologize for his comments being publicized and misunderstood. Perhaps he thought them true, his more toned-down persona to the contrary. Such feelings of eminence bespoke his renewed professional confidence, as had his return to Flem Snopes in the late 1930s in what became *The Hamlet*. The novel revealed "his own aggressive self. This side of him had always been there, as in the young man who was determined to recover for himself the glory lost over generations in the Falkner clan."<sup>82</sup> In concert with his competitiveness, drive to be America's top writer, and completion of the Snopes saga in *The Town* (1957) and *The Mansion* (1959), Faulkner's "aggressive self" had engaged with Hemingway, had "always been there" implicitly yet sharply.

Hemingway was incensed when he discovered that Faulkner had placed him fourth in a field of five writers. Initially, he took great umbrage at the ranking, because he predictably misconstrued Faulkner's meaning of "courage." Whereas Faulkner was referring to his artistic courage, he read the comments as questioning his masculine courage. This distinction between artistic and physical courage speaks to how they saw their professional identities. Faulkner distinguished Hemingway as *man* and *author*, while Hemingway nearly always coupled Faulkner the *man* and *author*. One also sees this in "old corn-drinking mellifluous," the sobriquet that he shared with Harvey Breit in a February 1955 letter. "[C]orn-drinking" refers to Faulkner's troubled personal life, while "mellifluous" refers to his writing, whose verbosity and floridity Hemingway thought caused by alcohol.<sup>83</sup> Hemingway—arguably the most competitive American writer of their era, or any other—equated *man* and *author*, seen in his frequent attacks against other writers. Faulkner's comments had given Hemingway the impression that he saw himself as both a better author and as a better man. This, of course, did not sit well with Hemingway, who retaliated against what he perceived as a two-front attack on his literary and masculine worth.

Hemingway was so heated that he asked General Buck Lanham to attest to his battlefield (read masculine) courage. News of his fourth-place ranking had come at a bad time for Hemingway, who was in a particularly troubled mood—Patrick was recovering from a concussion, Mary had a bad case of the flu, and his longtime editor Max Perkins had died on June 17.<sup>84</sup> Hemingway was feeling vulnerable and on edge, and Faulkner's comments could not have reached him at a more emotionally tense time, hence his being so cross initially. Rarely needing added impetus to lash out at Faulkner, Hemingway promptly

82. Parini, 232.

83. Hemingway, Letter to Harvey Breit, February 1, 1955. ©2012 Printed with the permission of The Ernest Hemingway Foundation.

84. Reynolds, *Hemingway: The Final Years*, 156–57.

vented to his wife and Lanham. His "black ass," as he called it, momentarily in check, he told Mary on June 26 of the situation. After relating domestic matters—Patrick's health, his own sleeping—he recounted the Faulkner episode and Lanham's four-page letter defending his heroism:

I could never be 10% as good or as [Lanham] claimed but he went into particulars about the break through—Normandy—Rambouillet, the rat race Siegfried, Schnee Eifel, Hurtgen and the Bulge fight and while I dont want to make Mr. Faulkner feel bad and like him and think he is a good writer Bucks letter will make him realize that there are or have been other wars since the Civil War—and Buck didnt say so but it will occur to him, I guess, that he wasnt there. I wish I could buy him a drink and tell him it doesnt mean a damn thing and I'm glad he wasnt there and wish he'd just write so I can read it.

[ . . . . ]

But it may have been good for Mr. Faulkner and might even shock him into writing, which would be good. Because we're all our own ancestors now [ . . . . ]<sup>85</sup>

Regardless of Hemingway's assertion that he admires and wants to avoid lashing out at Faulkner, he misconstrues Faulkner's comments somewhat condescendingly, implying much more than he says. Responding to the charge of his artistic limitations, Hemingway counters with his own, effectively downplaying Faulkner's professional worth, distinguishing the authors, and advocating his own literary and experiential superiority. He notes apparent limits in Faulkner's life and art, namely, his connection to war and implication that he too narrowly focuses on one war, effectively ignoring the artistic and cultural importance Hemingway grafted onto both World Wars. Because Faulkner was not in Europe, Hemingway's logic goes, he lacks the real-world experience necessary for the modern writer and was somewhat sheltered in Civil War-obsessed Oxford. As well, that the ranking seems meaningless is disingenuous; Faulkner's comments rankled Hemingway, hence his dispatching Lanham to defend him and sharply criticizing Faulkner. Hemingway's tendency toward gendered misprision is also apparent. Faulkner made no overt claim about his physical courage, but he interpreted the "courage" remark as suggesting such, while perhaps implying his own greater manhood because he was "there" in Europe.

This letter embodies Hemingway's mixed feelings about Faulkner: worthy

85. Hemingway, Letter to Mary Hemingway, June 26, 1947. ©2012 Printed with the permission of The Ernest Hemingway Foundation.

of respect but thematically limited. Hemingway rebutted Faulkner's apparent accusation of his cowardice by referencing his own action in World War II. Conversely, Hemingway's idea that Faulkner's absence from the Second World War implies that his artistic presence was still strong, and that he would welcome a jumpstart to Faulkner's writing. His remarks about Faulkner often followed suit: he recognized Faulkner's talent, was unsettled by it, and then lashed out. Although he experienced similar "black ass" throughout his life and became increasingly skeptical of Faulkner, Hemingway's emotional state had righted itself by the time he wrote to his wife, later enabling him to think about and respond to Faulkner somewhat rationally and civilly.

Before such civility, though, came bitterness, anxiety, and belligerence. These remarks about Hemingway's suspect artistic courage had stung particularly hard because they had come from his Ur-adversary. Although Faulkner did not attack Hemingway's manhood, he painted Hemingway's art as limited, sometimes formulaic, and inferior, effectively setting the stage for his later quasi-apologies. Hemingway felt that Lanham could best defend and attest to his courage. Lanham, who was with Hemingway during the fighting in the Hürtgen Forest and vouched for his battlefield composure, wrote Faulkner on June 24, noting that Hemingway was "without exception the most courageous man I have ever known, both in war and in peace. He has physical courage, and he has that far rarer commodity, moral courage."<sup>86</sup> Lanham also seems to have sent Faulkner a copy of Hemingway's Bronze Medal Citation, which Hemingway had received in mid-June and presumably forwarded to Lanham; the award reads, in part, "[Hemingway] displayed a broad familiarity with modern military science, interpreting and evaluating the campaigns and operations of friendly and enemy forces, circulating freely under fire in combat areas in order to obtain an accurate picture of conditions."<sup>87</sup> Hand in hand with the Bronze Medal Citation, Lanham's recounting of these various battles doubtless struck Faulkner as proof of his coeval's courage. Although both men exaggerated their war experiences, Hemingway was wounded in the First World War and very much in harm's way during the Spanish Civil War and the Second World War. Faulkner may have thought himself a better artist, but he knew that, of the two, only Hemingway had proven himself in battle.

Sounding a bit humbled and conciliatory, Faulkner responded on June 28. He admitted knowing of Hemingway's military résumé, stressed that his ranking was not a personal attack, and then apologized. If he had intended his ranking to only be insulting, any such vitriol is absent in this letter: "it had no reference whatever to Hemingway as a man: only to his craftsman-

86. Qtd. in Baker, 461.

87. Citation for Bronze Star Medal, June 1947.



ship as a writer. I know of his record in two wars and in Spain, too." Further,

In one of [the class sessions] I was asked to rate the greatest American writers. I answered, I wouldn't attempt it since I believed no man could, but (after further insistence) I would give my own personal rating of my own coevals: the men whose names were most often connected with mine since we began to write.

"I think we all failed (in that none of us had yet the stature of Dickens, Dosto[y]evsky, Balzac, Thacker[a]y, etc.). [ . . . ] That Hemingway was next since he did not have the courage to get out on a limb as the others did, to risk bad taste, over-writing, dullness, etc."

This was elaborated of course. I spoke extemporaneously, without notes, as I believed at the time, informally, not for publication. Your letter was my first intimation that it had been released, and from what you re-quoted, garbled and incomplete.

I'm sorry of it. A copy of this goes to Hemingway, with a covering note. Whatever other chances I have to correct it, I shall certainly take.<sup>88</sup>

On the same day, Faulkner dashed off a contrite note; "Dear Hemingway," he began,

I'm sorry of this damn stupid thing. I was just making \$250.00, I thought informally, not for publication, or I would have insisted on looking at the stuff before it was released. I have believed for years that the human voice has caused all human ills and I thought I had broken myself of talking. Maybe this will be my valedictory lesson.

I hope it wont matter a damn to you. But if or when or wherever it does, please accept another squirm from yours truly.<sup>89</sup>

By Faulkner's explanation, Lanham and Hemingway should think that his remarks were unplanned, unknowingly printed, and, more importantly, not meant to be in the hands of the antagonistic man whom he thought was the fourth-best contemporary writer. He emphasizes that he was appraising Hemingway as an artist, upholding the *man-author* distinction and admiring him for his firsthand combat experience. Faulkner likely wanted to avoid exacerbating an already tense situation, or else this letter may have been confrontational, or never even written. In part, he also probably feared angering the ever-sensitive and pugnacious Hemingway, lest they engage in a protracted public war of words that would adversely affect his private

88. Faulkner, *Selected Letters of William Faulkner*, 251.

89. *Ibid.*, 251–52.

lifestyle and regenerating creativity. Relatedly, their respective performances of gender are at odds here: Faulkner's reserved masculine demeanor often sought mitigation or gentility, while Hemingway's hyper-macho attitude typically sought conflict, be it real or imagined. "[A]n enacted fantasy or incorporation" of their era's socialized masculinities, Faulkner's and Hemingway's acting out their masculine constructs "constitute[s] the identity they are said to reveal," namely, a more self-confident pose and more aggressive affect, respectively.<sup>90</sup> Despite some differences in tone and degree, both men's codes of manhood were culturally rooted and performed with some eagerness, seen here in their association of war, authorial competition, and the male writer's life and work.

Their differing modes of masculine performance notwithstanding, Faulkner's friendly tone affected Hemingway, who responded amicably on July 16. "Dear Bill," he opened:

The hell with the whole thing. I'm sorry that you were misquoted and that Gen. Buck Lanham went to the trouble of writing the letter on the misquote and that you should have to write to me and to Buck. Thank you very much for doing so.

Buck was my best friend on the rat race and in the real fighting afterwards in the Schnee Eifel, Hurtgen woods, and Luxemburg and so don't take it too seriously any good things he might say about me. He is a great soldier and the best regimental commander I ever knew and I wish you could meet sometime. Maybe we can all three get together.

Please know that none of it means a damn to me now we know what it was about. Would fight anytime for your right to call me any sort of son of a bitch as a writer even though might disagree. Same way would be glad to shoot it out over any personal points of honor. Only I hope I'd shoot to miss you on account of wanting to keep you as a writer. Actually I know I would.

You are so much better writer than Wolfe [that I] cannot understand how you can be fooled by the bulk of his stuff. [ . . . ]

I hope you're well and that your family are and that you're working good. I'd like to get together with you [ . . . ] and drink a little and talk. There are very few of us left.

Very best to you always, [Hemingway's signature]<sup>91</sup>

That he regrets Lanham's writing to Faulkner is insincere, because Hemingway himself mobilized Lanham to do so. As well, Hemingway suggests an open-

90. Butler, 136, 141.

91. Hemingway, Letter to William Faulkner, July 16, 1947. ©2012 Printed with the permission of The Ernest Hemingway Foundation.

ness to Faulkner's criticisms yet implies his own competing artistic vision. His imagined duel thinly veils his hostility and shows Hemingway's willingness to fight such a duel—an imagined (and desired) gunfight was seemingly a code of his manhood. In such a symbolic duel, Hemingway would only "hope" to miss his aim. Because he did not write something to the effect of "I would shoot to miss you," he reveals the figurative violence of his persona. He could have retyped or otherwise clarified the wording here, but the letter shows no emendations, crossings-out, or marginal corrections. To a mostly symbolic degree, Hemingway may have wanted his words to have connotations of violence. In his mind, if Faulkner thought that he could imagine shooting at him, then that would dissuade him from questioning Hemingway's unassailable courage and masculinity.

As in many other Hemingway letters, there is a volatile fusion of admiration and agon (or, conflict) here. Faulkner ranked Wolfe first; Hemingway rethinks this ranking, implying that Faulkner should have ranked himself first instead of second, or perhaps that Faulkner is not good at ranking their contemporaries. Wolfe, Hemingway notes, was greatly helped by Max Perkins, who pared down Wolfe's verbose prose and enhanced his worth. Feeling a certain affinity with Faulkner as a fellow modernist ("us"), he ostensibly continued Faulkner's attempts at mollification by twice suggesting that they meet and drink together, though it seems that they never did meet judging by biographical evidence. As he also did in his June 26 letter to Mary, Hemingway understates his military résumé by admitting that Lanham may have exaggerated and that Faulkner should not believe everything Lanham said about him. This letter's amicable comments, salutation, and valediction seem aberrational, given that Hemingway had spoken—and would speak—ill of Faulkner elsewhere and that he was antagonistic toward other authors. His past reservations about Faulkner aside—for one, that he did not know how to end a sentence—Hemingway seems to value him as an important American writer, which is also why he suggests their imagined duel over literary prominence. Hemingway seems to have sent Lanham a copy of his letter, likely to vent his ire while remaining relatively civil when writing to Faulkner. Hemingway may no longer have been overtly angry, but Lanham was, thinking that Faulkner "must be a bastard underneath" for admiring a war he had not seen firsthand.<sup>92</sup>

On July 19, Faulkner responded to the amicable tenor of Hemingway's letter and their mutual attempt to allay the new tension between them. "Dear Brother H,"

92. Lanham, Letter to Ernest Hemingway, July 18, 1947.

Thank you for your letter. I feel much better, not completely all right; I owed Lanham an apology and I hope he accepted it but the bloke I'm still eating shit to is Faulkner. I cringe a little at my own name in printed gossip; I hate like hell to have flung any other man's into it. Damn stupid business, one of those trivial things you throw off just talking, a nebulous idea of no value anyway, that you test by saying it.

[ . . . ] Take a thing like *Madame Bovary* (not the woman: the book) or your *Alpine Idyll* or that one of Joyce's about the woman playing the piano ["The Dead"]. [ . . . ] It's finished, complete, all the trash hacked off and thrown away, 3 dimensions and solid like a block of ice or marble; nothing more than even God could do to it; it's hard, durable, the same anywhere in fluid time; you can write another as hard and as durable if you are good enough but you can't beat it. That's on the one hand.

On the other is this: say you capture the light rays that contained London in 1830–1840; if you keep on turning corners long enough you will meet face to face Mrs Gamp carrying the same umbrella and the cloth bag with the same bottle of gin in it, or a hundred years further back and you will see Tom Jones come charging out of the bushes scrabbling at his fly with one hand and snatching Thwackum's cudgel away from him with the other. That's what I meant about Wolfe and (second to him) Dos Passos—some truth now and then out of the junk, and Dos P. second (since there are no degrees of truth) because with him the gross bulk and mass is smaller.

I wish I'd said it that way. But even then it would have been misquoted probably, as most things not worth saying in the [first] place usually are. But what [I] wish most is I'd never said it at all, or that I could forget having done so, which perhaps I could and would if it had not been about a first rate man.<sup>93</sup>

Having signed the letter "Bill F.," Faulkner again praises Hemingway's talents, calls him a "first rate man" (though apparently still fourth-place writer), downgrades his own statement to "a nebulous idea of no value anyway," and suggests his respect. He may not have taken such pains to clarify his statements if he had minimal respect for—or had not been wary of—Hemingway. That Faulkner equates him with Flaubert, Joyce, and others suggests that "An Alpine Idyll" is as sound as *Madame Bovary*, "The Dead," *Martin Chuzzlewit*, and *Tom Jones*. This separates Hemingway from Wolfe and Dos Passos who only express "some truth" in their work. The salutation of each letter is also suggestive: Faulkner wrote to "Hemingway" on June 28 but to "Brother H" on July 19. The two men could speak directly with some mutual admira-

93. Faulkner, Letter to Ernest Hemingway, July 19, 1947.

tion, despite Hemingway's imagined duel. Faulkner's competitiveness and masculinity did not entail (symbolic) violence as Hemingway's did, and he may have been wary of more "printed gossip." Still, he likely wanted to keep the upper hand: moral courage defined "the exact terms by which his rivalry with Hemingway might serve him in the shaping of his own lasting reputation," emblematic of how each defined himself with and against the other, and of how Faulkner never retracted his statement and often reiterated his own superiority.<sup>94</sup>

Hemingway reciprocated Faulkner's praise in his July 23 response, a very encouraging letter of several pages, the longest that either had written to the other. Here, "Brother H" called himself Faulkner's "brother" twice, likely to alleviate the ill will that the ranking and his reaction to it effected. "Dear Bill," this lengthy letter begins:

Awfully glad to hear from you and glad to have made contact. Your letter came tonight and please throw all the other stuff away, the misunderstanding. [ . . . ] There isn't any at all. I was sore and Buck was sore and we were instantly unsore the minute we knew the score.

I know what you mean about T. Wolfe and Dos and still can't agree. I never felt the link-up in Wolfe except with the N.C. stuff. Dos I always liked and respected and thought was a 2nd rate writer on acct. no ear. 2nd rate boxer has no left hand, same as ear to writer, and so gets his brains knocked out and this happened to Dos with every book. Also terrible snob (on acct. of being a bastard) [ . . . ]

You picked a very cold one of mine ["An Alpine Idyll"] to make the comparison on about the great thing we would all like to do. To make it really how it was any really good morning—but I tried to get way past that [in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*]. [ . . . ] Probably bore the shit out of you to re-read but as brother would like to know what you think. Anyway is as good as I can write and was takeing all chances (for a pitcher who, when has control, can throw fairly close) could take. (Probably failed.)

Difference with us guys is I always lived out of country (as mercenary or patriot) since kid. My own country gone. Trees cut down. Nothing left but gas stations, sub-divisions where we hunted snipe on the prairie, etc. [ . . . ] Been chickenshit dis-placed person since can remember but fought each time before we lost (and this last time we fought with most stuff and it was the easiest and we lost the worst). Things never been worse than now.

You are a better writer than Fielding or any of those guys and you should know it and keep on writing. You have things written that come back to me

94. Monteiro, "The Faulkner-Hemingway Rivalry," 87.

better than any of them and I am not dopy, really. You shouldn't read the shit about living writers. You should always write your best against dead writers that we know what stature (not stature: evocative power) that they have and beat them one by one. Why do you want to fight Dosto[y]evsky in your first fight? Beat Turgenieff—which we both did soundly. [ . . . ] Then nail yourself DeMaupassant (tough boy until he got the old rale. Still dangerous for three rounds.) Then try to take Stendhal. (Take him and we're all happy.) But don't fight with the poor pathological characters of our time (we won't name). You and I can both beat Flaubert who is our most respected, honored master. [ . . . ] Anyway I am your Bro. if you want one that writes and I'd like us to keep in touch. My middle kid (Pat) very sick now 4 months. Had to feed rectally 45 days. [ . . . ] Please excuse if write stupidly. This most talented boy. Oldest very . . . nice. Capt Paratroops 3 times wounded etc. Prisoner 6 months. We mounted attack to get him out of hock when first taken P.O.W. and accessible (drop) but was cancelled. This boy [Gregory] (sick) good painter, head smashed in auto accident his kid bro. driving. Excuse chickenshit letter. Have much regard for you. Would like to keep on writing.<sup>95</sup>

As usual, Hemingway sees writing competitively, as if he were boxing with Flaubert or Turgenyev. However, he suggests that he and Faulkner symbolically join forces against the canon of Western literature, implying that Faulkner's artistic talents are comparable to his own. Continuing the rhetorical strategy of Faulkner's July 19 letter, Hemingway employs brotherly language to suggest a modernist siblinghood, insofar as they both felt a professional connection and artistic sibling rivalry. In a symbolic sense, Hemingway inadvertently recognizes Sherwood Anderson's role as his and Faulkner's literary progenitor who begat psychological influence-anxiety in both of his mentees, a dynamic that they would repeat in their own vexed relationship. Envisioning them as fraternal though competitive, Hemingway praises Faulkner's writing and mildly belittles his own by suggesting *For Whom the Bell Tolls* was a creative disappointment. Faulkner may have considered this "failure" a good thing, considering that his ranking was based on how much Wolfe and others failed in their attempts at experimentation. Hemingway, though, seems concerned that "An Alpine Idyll" is dated and that Faulkner does not judge him on the basis of his less "cold," more progressive works. Hemingway's admission of his chance-taking in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* indicates a shared psychocompetitive influence. He invokes Faulkner's criticism of his "never crawl[ing] out on a limb" and taking artistic risks, essentially arguing for his ability to innovate and be as progressive as Faulkner was.

Hemingway could easily have omitted the emotional commentary on how

95. Hemingway, *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters*, 623–25.

he has been geographically uprooted (in sharp contrast to the more rooted Faulkner) or on his sons, but he may have wanted to communicate more personally. Surprisingly, he expressed friendly, apologetic remarks, even though he was becoming increasingly prone to fits of paranoia and anger against Mary, his sons, and friends during and after the late 1940s. Hemingway's writing a long, cordial letter rather than a short, indifferent one implies a feeling of intellectual camaraderie with Faulkner. This "friendly response," though, "was on a good day. Time and again, when the paranoia, lurking beneath the surface of his reason, became full blown, he would come back to Faulkner's inadvertent insult, reopening the old wound."<sup>96</sup> His friendliness shows that, at least in this letter, he saw more in Faulkner than the verbose, alcohol-inspired writing and seemingly endless sentences he often maligned. He would abandon such friendliness in later letters and revisit his ideas about Faulkner's apparent "failures," often harshly.

Faulkner's ranking initially came across as disparaging of Dos Passos, Hemingway, and Steinbeck, but his clarification and apologies suggest that he did not only mean to insult Hemingway. Had he meant to affront Hemingway, he could have let Lanham's response go unanswered, or he could have come back with further criticisms. His ranking became public, and thus harder to rein in, when an account of it ran in the New York *Herald Tribune*. Faulkner learned of the release of this apparent gossip, and he seemed anxious to clarify what he had said, meant to say, or wanted to appear to have said about Hemingway. Faulkner's different attitudes, however, indicate a split in his persona: his reserved side wanted to avoid open confrontation with another writer, particularly one so truculent as Hemingway; his private, daemonic side may have wanted to disparage Hemingway's literary reputation and elevate his own. His public guise was measurably different—he probably would not have responded to Wallace Stevens's criticisms with fisticuffs as Hemingway did in 1936—yet he wanted to have the edge in their increasingly heated competition. Suggesting that he was the best living writer and pointing out Hemingway's artistic limitations enabled Faulkner to gain professional advantage while not appearing as overtly aggressive as Hemingway.

While they had felt, and would continue to feel, competitive, there is no clear-cut acrimony in the letters they exchanged. Yet, their shared psychological influence is implicit. Faulkner and Hemingway suggest an awareness of each other's talents, abilities, and worth through their positive, respectful remarks—Hemingway's imagined, perhaps hoped-for, duel excepted. While they eschewed outright personal attacks and antipathy in their direct correspondence, recognizing each other's merit may have made them even more

96. Reynolds, *Hemingway: The Final Years*, 158.

anxious to look better. Such added motivation effected more psychocompetitive influence and more intertextual commentary and allusion. They followed this pattern from 1947 until the mid-1950s, and their intertextual sparring peaked in the wake of Faulkner's ranking, his Nobel Prize (1950), Hemingway's Nobel Prize (1954), and numerous comments until 1955. Faulkner's ranking had primed them for this last, most tense period of their rivalry.

In the summer of 1947, these modernist "brothers" got as close as they ever would to a social relationship. While they did not continue corresponding, Faulkner and Hemingway produced a short-lived connection that embodied the complex attitudes of their dynamic: influence-anxiety, admiration, disdain, and competitiveness. They may have traded compliments, but they would continue to criticize, rival, and begrudgingly respect each other. Faulkner's pivotal ranking and the aftermath effected his and Hemingway's only direct communication in which they saw each other as dueling artistic siblings, painted each other as worthy competitors, and revitalized their rivalry and guarded mutual esteem.

### ALL APOLOGIES?: NEW YORK, NAGANO, CHARLOTTESVILLE

The ramifications of Faulkner's ranking went well beyond July 1947; he had to revisit this episode: in a profile by Harvey Breit, "A Walk with Faulkner" (*Times Book Review*, January 30, 1955); in Nagano, Japan (August 1955); and as Writer-in-Residence at the University of Virginia (1957–1958). That Faulkner's critical remarks reverberated for so long—both in Hemingway's mind and in Faulkner's audiences in Japan and Virginia—seems to be part of their inherent agon and cultural standing. The ranking echoed in Hemingway's mind in the 1950s; this suggests its potential accuracy and, by extension, his growing anxiety over Faulkner's late achievements and competitive influence. The appeal of two confident, accomplished authors publicly sparring could have attuned some readers and critics to their subsequent interactions to see when and how Hemingway would respond, or if Faulkner's remarks were accurate.

Just as Faulkner had to clarify his comments after his ranking was publicized, he was anxious to avoid any further interruptions or misinterpretations. He still respected Hemingway to a degree, but he privileged his own creative responsibilities. While Faulkner did not fear that Hemingway would fight him as he fought with Wallace Stevens and Max Eastman, he was certainly wary of further public squabbling interfering with his self-imposed



privacy and more understated way of dealing with Hemingway in his own writing, not the press. He preferred his private, if provincial, creativity as a forum for rivaling Hemingway and articulating his own aesthetics. Regardless of his criticisms, Faulkner was largely positive when revisiting his comments in New York, Japan, and Virginia; yet, he tempered his praise, noting Hemingway's achievements and limitations. When he spoke publicly in the 1950s, he seemed to choose his words carefully, granting Hemingway the Alpha Male role yet self-confidently feeling himself the better artist. This is one of the ways that their personalities and masculinities differed—Faulkner would either brush off Hemingway's criticisms or respond indirectly, whereas Hemingway would threaten violence and respond directly and aggressively. Their dynamic was tense enough without regular social encounters—one can only wonder what would have happened had Hemingway and Faulkner seen each other with any regularity.

In "A Walk with Faulkner," he explained to Breit: "The work never matches the dream of perfection the artist had to start with. [ . . . ] I had in mind this dream of perfection and how the best contemporary writers failed to match it."

"I was asked [ . . . ] who were the five best contemporary writers and how did I rate them. And I said Wolfe, Hemingway, Dos Passos, Caldwell and myself. I rated Wolfe first, myself second. I put Hemingway last. I said we were all failures. All of us had failed to match the dream of perfection and I rated the authors on the basis of their splendid failure to do the impossible. I believed Wolfe tried to do the greatest of the impossible, that he tried to reduce all human experience to literature. And I thought after Wolfe I had tried the most. I rated Hemingway last because he stayed within what he knew. He did it fine, but he didn't try for the impossible.

[ . . . ] "I rated those authors by the way in which they failed to match the dream of perfection," he said. "This had nothing to do with the value of the work, the impact or perfection of its own kind that it had. I was talking only about the magnificence of the failure, the attempt to do the impossible within human experience."<sup>97</sup>

First contrasting himself with Hemingway, Faulkner implies that his artistic endeavors are regnant. Faulkner always took more artistic chances; their varying degrees of experimentation, in his mind, differentiated them and justified his own higher ranking. Although he may have some of the facts wrong—about ranking Hemingway last, not fourth; about including

97. Qtd. in *Meriwether and Millgate*, 81–82.

Caldwell, not Steinbeck—he seemingly evaluated Hemingway on the basis of his artistic courage, not physical courage. Including himself in this list of “failures,” Faulkner reiterates that his critique referred only to Hemingway’s writing—which “did it fine” but was not pushed far enough. Though, by Faulkner’s logic, Hemingway had failed the least as an artist, he was still below Wolfe, Dos Passos, and himself; he would have been a more successful “failure” had he lived up to his potential and experimented more. If Faulkner had meant to denounce Hemingway’s work patently, he may not have been so thorough in his clarification—perhaps he would have simply indicated that the comment was misconstrued or brushed off the question. Of course, he said much more to Breit and, indirectly, to Hemingway himself, since Hemingway was always anxious to hear anything that Faulkner said about him.

Presumably, Faulkner cared something about what Hemingway thought of him, but more so about protecting his public image, as he showed in Japan. In August 1955, Faulkner visited Nagano to participate in a meeting of about fifty Japanese professors of American literature. At a press conference soon after his arrival, Faulkner was asked about Hemingway’s artistic limits, a question that would be repeated in various forms and forums. He responded,

I thought that he found out early what he could do and he stayed inside of that. He never did try to get outside the boundary of what he really could do and risk failure. He did what he really could do marvelously well, first rate, but to me that is not success but failure [ . . . ] failure to me is the best. To try something you can’t do, because it’s too much [to hope for], but still to try it and fail, then try it again. That to me is a success.

Q.: Would you consider that narrowness of the world [is a bad thing]?

F.: That is a difficult question, because I would have to be Hemingway to answer that. As Faulkner, I say that it is bad, but if I were Hemingway, who stayed within what he knew and had done a first-rate job like *The Old Man and the Sea*, maybe. [ . . . ] But to me that is not enough, to fail is better. To try to do more than you can do.<sup>98</sup>

Asked about the connection between the writer’s environment and the writer’s style at another seminar, Faulkner brought up Hemingway as an example:

Occasionally there would be one like Hemingway, who through instinct or through good preceptors learned that he could do better by holding to a

98. Qtd. in Jelliff, 3–4.

supple, undeviable style, and he trained himself not to be a stylist but to tell what moved him in that method which his preceptors said, "This is a good method." He has stuck to that. He was right to do it, probably, because what he's done is very fine. But the others, Wolfe, for instance, and myself, for instance, we didn't have the instinct, or the preceptors, or whatever it was, anyway. We tried to crowd and cram everything, all experience, into each paragraph, to get the whole complete nuance of the moment's experience, of all the recaptured light rays, into each paragraph.<sup>99</sup>

At another colloquy, Faulkner was asked bluntly about his opinion of Hemingway:

E: A very fine talent, a man who knows exactly how to do what he wants to do.

Q.: And how do you think about his style?

E: His style is a perfect style in the sense that it suits exactly what he wants to do with it. He can control it, it never falters. So, if a style can be perfect it seems to me it must be the style that the man can use exactly and never fail nor falter with, which I think Hemingway does.<sup>100</sup>

In what had become a common refrain from his audiences, Faulkner was later asked to explain his stance on Hemingway, who "had found out early in life what he could do and he stayed within that pattern; [ . . . ] this judgment had nothing to do with the value of the work, it was only in what I would call the magnificence, the splendor, of the failure. [ . . . ] I think that the writer must want primarily perfection, that that is his one chance while he has breath, to attain perfection."<sup>101</sup> Faulkner's repeated praise of Hemingway's craft seems genuine because of its recurrence and his public composure while offering it. His numerous statements in Japan echo his conversation with Breit in the *Times Book Review*—he wanted to set the record straight, reservedly praise Hemingway, and avoid further public backbiting, all the while suggesting his own prominence. Faulkner's artistic fraternity with Hemingway notwithstanding, he foregrounds his own artistic principles, always preferring what he saw as his and Wolfe's risky "failure" to Hemingway's technical, though limited, perfection. Perhaps his ranking, despite its apparently "nebulous" and extemporaneous nature, was truthful after all.

The impact of his much-discussed ranking reached Faulkner later in the decade. Two years after his trip to Japan, he was Writer-in-Residence at the

99. Ibid., 36–37.

100. Ibid., 88–89.

101. Ibid., 161.

University of Virginia, where he participated in class sessions similar to those at the University of Mississippi in 1947—but without attendant controversy. As he did in Oxford, Faulkner answered a variety of students' questions about his work, politics, and literary opinions. As Parini notes: "He was an aristocrat now, having adopted another persona," among them "wounded war veteran, the scruffy artist who hung around the bohemian quarters of New Orleans and Greenwich Village, [ . . . ] the Nobel Prize-winning man-of-letters," and others from his past and present. Ten years after his class sessions at Ole Miss, the "professorial writer in residence" was for Faulkner a guise and a job, both befitting of his upper-echelon status in American letters.<sup>102</sup> On March 13, 1957, a student wondered which American writers would leave the most indelible mark:

I don't want to answer that question because I'm too unfamiliar with contemporary writers. I haven't read any contemporaries since the three or four of my time, and so often a remark like that in simple talk, it gets out, and someone's feelings have been hurt that the man that spoke it had no intention of hurting because he didn't even know he existed, and so for that reason I wouldn't answer that question at all. I would say that I think that Sherwood Anderson has not received the recognition that he deserves [ . . . ].

Q. What about Hemingway?

A. Hemingway, now he's alive, and that's where I'd better stay out of trouble by saying nothing, you see.<sup>103</sup>

Enacting a persona of the elder literary sage, Faulkner seems reluctant to comment, perhaps fearing a similar misinterpretation of his statement and more "trouble." He seems to have—and had, for that matter—"no intention of hurting" Hemingway, due to his respect, reluctance to have literary gossip intrude on his private life, preference to avoid rousing Hemingway's anger, and greater self-confidence. While these comments may not have riled up Hemingway—who likely did not read them—Faulkner foregrounded himself as the better, more experimental craftsman. As such, one again sees the tincture of their shared psychocompetitive motivation: Faulkner engaged with Hemingway more directly and protractedly than any other coeval. He may have felt superior to the "three or four" contemporaries whose work he claimed to know, but he jockeyed Hemingway for prominence so intensely that he often (re)asserted his feelings of superiority whenever Hemingway's name arose vis-à-vis his.

102. Parini, 413.

103. Qtd. in Gwynn and Blotner, 69–70.

On June 5, 1957, the pattern recurred at another class conference. Having been asked about his admiration for Wolfe, Faulkner's reply had become practically automatic:

Now that was an unfortunate remark I made. [ . . . ] This was twenty or thirty [ten] years ago. [ . . . ] And I said, Well, I think we all failed, so I will have to rate us on what I consider the splendor of our failure and so this is the way I would rate us, and ever since that I've been trying to explain that or live it down. [ . . . ] I rated Hemingway last not on the value of the product at all but simply because of Hemingway having taught himself a pattern, a method which he could use and he stuck to that without splashing around to try to experiment. It had nothing to do with the value of the work at all. It was simply on the degree of the attempt to reach the unattainable dream, to accomplish more than any flesh and blood man could accomplish, could touch.<sup>104</sup>

Faulkner echoes much of his language from Japan two years earlier—"splendor," "failure," "pattern," and "method," although he again misremembers the substance and date of his own remarks. He reiterates the mixed sentiment behind these words: that Hemingway was very good, that Faulkner saw even more potential in him, and that Faulkner felt Hemingway had reached his fullest potential and was satisfied to not push himself as far as *he* pushed himself.<sup>105</sup> He implied that his own "failure" was more splendid, that he advocated "splashing around to try to experiment," and that his own "degree of the attempt to reach the unattainable" was superior. Because their styles and methods of writing were so thoroughly contradistinctive, self-complimenting often entailed such criticism. Faulkner felt that his greater artistic courage drove him to experiment with narration, structure, and stream of consciousness in *Absalom, Absalom!*, *Intruder in the Dust*, and other avant-garde works. Faulkner appreciated Hemingway's "method" and respected him; he nevertheless tried to outdo him (and himself, in a sense), to "experiment" even more, even if it meant a kind of positive failure.

Reading Faulkner's 1947 letters to Hemingway concurrently with his later statements about his ranking demonstrates that Faulkner did not want his ranking to be seen solely as derisive commentary on Hemingway himself,

104. Ibid., 206–7.

105. After Faulkner's death, Nancy Hale, the wife of one of the University of Virginia's English professors, wrote an article for *Vogue* entitled "Col. Sartoris and Mr. Snopes," in which she discussed, among other memories of Faulkner's time in Charlottesville, his numerous class sessions, including Faulkner's comments about Hemingway. See Inge's *Conversations with William Faulkner* (138).

only on what, to his mind, were Hemingway's limited artistic abilities. This points toward a certain esteem for Hemingway, his desire to "stay out of trouble," as he said on March 13 in Charlottesville, and his often indirect ways of proclaiming his superiority. Always more socially detached than Hemingway, Faulkner probably wanted to imply his opinions on Hemingway's shortcomings, rather than assert them directly as he did in 1947. Again enacting his more understated masculinity and authorial persona, Faulkner did not want to undermine his reputation as the more generous and emotionally reserved artist, lest his writerly image be tarnished if he were seen as an argumentative, highly public figure. While he was almost as competitive as Hemingway was, he presented himself as the more controlled, courteous, and private writer who appeared to respect his fellow authors while passing judgment on them, sometimes harshly. Although he suggested that he was the best "failure" of living writers, Faulkner often asserted that Hemingway was admirable and had sufficient talent—but insufficient artistic courage—to fail as splendidly as he and Wolfe had. Such tempered statements about Hemingway's artistic "method" and abilities show Faulkner misrepresenting his literary and stylistic influence. His qualifications reveal some level of psychocompetitive influence concerning Hemingway, insofar as he tried to downplay what he saw as his rival's threatening (though slighter) artistic prominence.

### ARGUMENT AT A LESSER DISTANCE

They had become two of the nation's best living writers; their contemporary readers and critics would have given their publicized statements much weight, especially when such statements referred to each other with mixed, complex, potentially hostile attitudes. Faulkner was, in Hemingway's estimation, "hard to depend on," a horse who needed training to achieve the concision, implicitness, and fourth dimension of, for instance, "The Sea Change" or "A Simple Enquiry." Hemingway, in Faulkner's estimation, "didn't try for the impossible," did not experiment and "risk failure" as much as he himself had in the lengthy, challenging sentences and interiority of *Intruder in the Dust* or *The Bear*. Likewise, whereas Faulkner would "go on and on and not be able to end it," Hemingway was not a "stylist" and limited himself to a set "pattern"—a promising but not enduring pattern. Such cross-judgment illustrates that their aesthetic visions are best understood contradistinctively, as the authors themselves realized. Faulkner's imagination and prose, unlike Hemingway's, defied a "pattern," embodied a rich, convoluted style, and tried "for the impossible," regardless of any potential

failure. In contrast, Hemingway was controlled, not "hard to depend on," did not require training, and did not write "on and on" without end—or editing, to recall Hemingway's criticism in *Death in the Afternoon*. The authors saw themselves as worthy judges of the other's literary merit, each using his own aesthetic lens and criteria to judge the other. Faulkner's ranking and later explanations led to his direct communication with Hemingway and reenergized their dialectic. While the tone of 1950s letters revealed Hemingway's acrimony after Faulkner won the Nobel Prize, and while Faulkner would implicitly question Hemingway's aesthetic assumptions in his Nobel Prize address, the aftereffects of Faulkner's ranking created a brief symbolic fraternity. One need only look at their letters, as well as at Faulkner's later efforts to set the record somewhat straight, to sense the mercurial artistic affinity they felt in their quest to eclipse the "evocative power" of Dostoyevsky, Turgenev, Maupassant, Stendhal, Flaubert—and each other.

By the end of the 1940s, both Faulkner and Hemingway had created their respective artistic worlds, imaginative realms in which they had established patterns of style, theme, characterization, subject, and place. Throughout their careers, both modernists drew sharp contrasts with one another, with each implying the primacy of his own aesthetic vision. Their personal and artistic differences aside, Faulkner and Hemingway were foils for each other's aesthetic vision,<sup>106</sup> thus helping create a diverse, nuanced, and paradigmatic American modernism that echoed the intertextuality and occasional animus seen in European modernism. Their continually competing worlds induced anxiety, as well as artistic, emotional, and (especially for Faulkner) financial struggle in the 1940s. Early in the decade, Faulkner's creativity and literary reputation were uncertain before his critical resurgence in the wake of *The Portable Faulkner*. He had a concomitant financial upswing after the adaptation of *Intruder in the Dust* (October 1949) brought him \$40,000 for the film rights and Oxford much media attention while it was being shot there.<sup>107</sup> Hemingway encountered similar struggles while unsuccessfully trying to augment his oeuvre and critical reputation; that he published no major fiction during the decade weighed heavily upon him as a literary craftsman and competitor. His emotional and psychological unrest compounded his writing problems, as well as his anxiety over Faulkner's higher standing in their increasingly discordant contest. The parameters of what Cowley called this "argument at a distance" expanded throughout the 1940s, while drawing the men closer together.<sup>108</sup> Faulkner's and Hemingway's respective artistic worlds often clashed through a variety of texts, including letters in which

106. Cf., Rovit, "The Hemingway-Faulkner Generation."

107. Parini, 298.

108. Cowley, *The Faulkner-Cowley File*, 159.

they painted one another as, by turns, literary competitors, metaphorical racehorses, and artistic brothers. Although they did not write any more letters to each other after 1947, based on located correspondence, each would still be acutely aware of, eager to read, and more eager to disparage his adversary, particularly during their rivalry's zenith, 1947–1955.

This period of sharpest mutual awareness and competitive contempt continued three years after their exchange of letters, stemming from an exponential increase in Faulkner's fame. On the morning of November 10, 1950, Faulkner was at Rowan Oak and received extraordinarily good news: he had won the 1949 Nobel Prize, and he would soon travel to Stockholm to receive the award and deliver his acceptance speech. That Faulkner became a Nobel laureate before Hemingway would define the tone, substance, and direction of their dynamic over the next four years, until Hemingway won his own Nobel Prize. In the psychological dueling between these rival artists, Faulkner had scored a major victory that enabled him to surpass his more famous, photographed, and wealthy rival. Advantage Faulkner, maybe once and for all.



# 4

## NOBEL LAUREATES, WOLVES, AND HIGHER-RANKING WRITERS

### *Crescendo and Decrescendo in the 1950s and 1960s*

*Of course all life is a process of breaking down, but the blows that do the dramatic side of the work—the big sudden blows that come, or seem to come, from outside—the ones you remember and blame things on and, in moments of weakness, tell your friends about, don't show their effect all at once. There is another sort of blow that comes from within—that you don't feel until it's too late to do anything about it, until you realize with finality that in some regard you will never be as good a man again. The first sort of breakage seems to happen quick—the second kind happens almost without your knowing it but is realized suddenly indeed.*

—F. Scott Fitzgerald, “The Crack-Up” (1936)

For Faulkner and Hemingway, the 1950s would be their last full decade. They further protracted their sparring, received the highest literary honors, and made their last marks on the ever-closer wall of oblivion, an image that Faulkner often invoked. More poignantly, they doubtless realized that they were American modernism's old guard and that new, younger writers were poised to eclipse them. In their separate but corresponding lives, they were undergoing “crack-ups” similar to Fitzgerald's own in the mid-1930s. Both authors felt their writing talents declining rapidly—particularly Hemingway, who published *The Old Man and the Sea* in 1952 and very little afterwards. Early in the decade, their own rivalry was at its peak: Faulkner's 1947 ranking and 1950 Nobel Prize had struck a blow that Hemingway's then-fragile artistic ego struggled to parry. Late in the decade, they both must have felt their lives and minds winding down—neither would see age sixty-five.

As in previous decades, Faulkner and Hemingway's lives ran parallel courses in the 1950s and early 1960s. Both were in their late middle age and suffered from various physical ailments—arthritis, insomnia, physical and mental fatigue, depression, alcoholism, attendant liver problems, and emotional anxiety. Both men also experienced their fair share of accidents. Faulkner fell off his horses numerous times, each time hurting his fractured vertebrae a little more—he was rarely not in pain. Hemingway was in two plane crashes in twenty-four hours in January 1954, suffering various internal and external injuries and another concussion (his fifth). Such accidents further weakened their already-taxed bodies and minds and were remedied similarly: self-prescribed alcohol regimens, numerous prescription drugs, temporary withdrawals from alcohol, and electroshock treatments, all damaging their writing powers and senses of self. As well, they continued to experience marital tension, which was exacerbated by their flirtations and (in Faulkner's case) affairs with younger daughter-figures. Faulkner began an affair with Joan Williams early in the decade, temporarily rekindled his affair with Meta Carpenter while in Hollywood in 1951, and became infatuated with Jean Stein after he met her in Paris in 1953; Hemingway was infatuated with Adriana Ivancich (then his self-chosen muse) before and after writing *Across the River and into the Trees* (1950), and in 1959 he began a new flirtation with Valerie Danby-Smith in Spain while following the Ordóñez-Dominguín bullfights, much to Mary Hemingway's dismay in both cases.

Each man also traveled a great deal in his late middle age, worsening his physical ailments, tense marriage, and productivity. The usually peripatetic Hemingway globe-trotted to Spain, Italy, France, Africa, Peru, and various places in the United States while living at the Finca and, later, Ketchum, Idaho. On his part, Faulkner traveled much more than was typical: between 1950 and 1962, he left Oxford for New York, Washington, D.C., Paris, Sweden, Japan, Manila, Rome, Iceland, South America, and Greece. He would eventually buy a house in Charlottesville and trade time between Virginia and Mississippi in his last years. Faulkner's trips to Greece and Brazil were taken under the auspices of the U. S. State Department, for whom Faulkner acted as a cultural attaché, discussing the connection between art and international relations while acting the intellectual celebrity of sorts. By and large, Hemingway's and Faulkner's intensive travel during the 1950s and 1960s ran them down even more and kept them away from their writing, wives, and homes. Much to the detriment of each man's physiological and artistic wellbeing, their various problems involved a cycle of pain, depression, excessive drinking, and self- and prescribed medication. While they won Nobel and Pulitzer Prizes in the decade, they felt the bodily effects of lifetimes of drinking, depression, travel, physical

and emotional fatigue, and the daemons that paradoxically fueled and hindered their creativity.

The salient connections between the authors in the 1950s were not strictly personal. Both men still shared psychological and artistic sway, but Hemingway was more anxious than he had been over his place in American writing vis-à-vis Faulkner's after Faulkner won the Nobel Prize. He was all the time more resentful of playing the proverbial second fiddle. Virtually all of his comments in the 1950s were underscored by his disdain for Faulkner's status, even when he spoke positively. Faulkner still felt himself to be the better writer—the Nobel Prize and other awards surely aided him there. Yet he felt Hemingway's psychocompetitive influence as well. He may not have ascribed to Hemingway's literary minimalism, but he was at some level motivated by Hemingway's artistic presence to expand the limits of his writing even further. The final phase of their rivalry began in earnest when Faulkner got the phone call from New York notifying him of his place among Nobel laureates. Perhaps this would further expand his literary reach; at the very least, he had outdone Hemingway.

## THE NOBEL PRIZE

In the 1950s, nothing shaped Faulkner and Hemingway's duel more than the Nobel Prize. Faulkner learned that he would be awarded the 1949 Nobel Prize for Literature on November 10, 1950. Since there was no Nobel Prize awarded in 1949, Faulkner and Bertrand Russell were chosen in December 1950; Faulkner was officially given the 1949 prize, Russell the 1950 prize. Thus began the decade's definitive episode in his battle with Hemingway, which lasted until late 1954 when Hemingway was awarded the Nobel Prize. Faulkner's receiving the Nobel Prize first was a threatening victory. They were always aware of each other's work, statements, and status in American letters. The cross-textual debate between their Nobel Prize addresses and (indirectly) Hemingway's letters of 1950–1954 was not new, but the Nobel Prize intensified their dialectic, as it marked their place in a world literary canon.

### *"Old Universal Truths"*

Faulkner's highly charged Nobel Prize address, delivered in Stockholm on December 10, 1950, spoke to a much larger audience than Hemingway did in his letters and texts in which he noted Faulkner's apparent shortcomings. As George Monteiro, Joseph Blotner, and others note, Faulkner wrote a lofty speech which alluded to Hemingway several times. He spoke of the

artists' duties, immortality, younger writers' responsibilities, and how art must endure and prevail in the face of mortality. It was signature Faulkner—highly rhetorical and discussing Art in broad, sweeping strokes. Expectedly, Hemingway was part of the artistic thrust of Faulkner's speech, since they so often complemented each other's aesthetic sensibilities. Faulkner implicitly alludes to Hemingway at the end of his first paragraph, when he says that he wanted to use "this moment as a pinnacle from which I might be listened to by the young men and women already dedicated to the same anguish and travail, among whom is already that one who will some day stand here where I am standing."<sup>1</sup> While Faulkner does not specify "that one," it seems likely that he had Hemingway in mind as a Nobel-worthy author, which he had implied in *Pylon*. In the delivered speech he seemingly addressed only younger writers, but in earlier drafts he considered naming Hemingway and Dos Passos as Nobel-worthy.<sup>2</sup>

Faulkner's speech casts Hemingway's aesthetic vision critically: "the problems of the human heart in conflict with itself" are the "only" thing "worth writing about, worth the agony and the sweat." These "problems," he implies, have been forgotten.<sup>3</sup> Part of relearning this fundamental idea is embracing "the old universal truths lacking which any story is ephemeral and doomed—love and honor and pity and pride and compassion and sacrifice." Faulkner later builds on this artistic lexicon, saying that the grand Man

will not merely endure: he will prevail. He is immortal, not because he alone among creatures has an inexhaustible voice, but because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance. The poet's, the writer's, duty is to write about these things. It is his privilege to help man endure by lifting his heart, by reminding him of the courage and honor and hope and pride and compassion and pity and sacrifice which have been the glory of his past.<sup>4</sup>

It might seem that Faulkner is simply referring to the broad themes of his ideal Art; however, he is also alluding to Hemingway. Because Hemingway had been and would continue to be a part of his professional life, he purposely echoes—and moves beyond—one of his seminal works, *A Farewell to Arms*, while stating his own artistic agenda. Having already used *A Farewell to Arms* in *The Wild Palms*, he again recast this novel of love and war in his own work.

1. Faulkner, "Address upon Receiving the Nobel Prize for Literature," 119.

2. Blotner, *Faulkner*, 528.

3. Faulkner, "Address upon Receiving the Nobel Prize for Literature," 119.

4. *Ibid.*, 120.

Eight years before his speech, Faulkner anticipated some of this passage's language in Section IV of *The Bear*, as Isaac and his cousin discuss, among other things, Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn." For McCaslin: "[truth] covers all things which touch the heart—honor and pride and pity and justice and courage and love.' [ . . . ] 'Courage and honor and pride, and pity and love of justice and of liberty. They all touch the heart, and what the heart holds to becomes truth, as far as we know truth.'"<sup>5</sup> This section of an archetypal Faulkner text embodies two of his influences: Keats (artistic) and Hemingway (psychocompetitive). As seen in *A Farewell to Arms*, *honor* and *courage* had no place in Frederic Henry's lexicon, yet these and other words were key to the aesthetic philosophy Faulkner wove into his Nobel Prize address.

Following his aesthetic of revising and reiving, Faulkner refits Frederic's conversation with Gino in his Nobel Prize speech. "Reiving, like writing, is meant to lift the materials, as it were, and maybe the spirit." Faulkner, by his own account in *The Faulkner Reader*, had read the phrase "to uplift men's hearts" in Henryk Sienkiewicz's works. He then "put the idea to different and certainly better use in his Nobel Prize Address. [ . . . ] In the logic of reiving, even though Faulkner may have taken the words from Sienkiewicz, the idea belongs to Faulkner because he transformed it from an obscure idea to a Faulknerian trope," much like he did with *A Farewell to Arms*, but with an added undercurrent of rivalry.<sup>6</sup> In Hemingway's novel, once Gino says, "What has been done this summer cannot have been done in vain," Frederic famously thinks,

I did not say anything. I was always embarrassed by the words sacred, glorious, and sacrifice and the expression in vain. We had heard them, sometimes standing in the rain almost out of earshot, so that only the shouted words came through, and had read them, on proclamations that were slapped up by billposters over other proclamations, now for a long time, and I had seen nothing sacred, and the things that were glorious had no glory and the sacrifices were like the stockyards at Chicago if nothing was done with the meat except to bury it. There were many words that you could not stand to hear and finally only the names of places had dignity. [ . . . ] Abstract words such as glory, honor, courage, or hallow were obscene beside the concrete names of villages, the numbers of roads, the names of rivers, the numbers of regiments and the dates.<sup>7</sup>

5. Faulkner, *Go Down, Moses*, 220.

6. Urgo, 12.

7. Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms*, 184–85.

Faulkner references a key episode in an archetypal Hemingway text, one in which Frederic voiced Hemingway's goals for a pure, concrete, Imagist-rooted art. These ideas, as we know, undergirded his revolutionary aesthetic and often clashed with Faulkner's own. This distinction centers on *honor*, *courage*, *sacrifice*, and *glory*, which serve each author inversely: Hemingway wants to eschew them for "concrete" words, while the Nobel laureate Faulkner wants to use such "abstract" language. "[O]n this occasion," Monteiro posits, "he was [ . . . ] echoing Frederic Henry, whose rejection of war-time talk about [ . . . ] absolutes occurs in one of the most celebrated passages in Hemingway's fiction."<sup>8</sup> For Hemingway, this thematic quartet was embarrassing, undignified, meaningless in practical terms, and "obscene" because such words were often mis- or overused during the war; for Faulkner, they were "old verities and truths" indispensable to modern literature. *Honor*, *courage*, *sacrifice*, and *glory* buttressed Faulkner's aesthetic consciousness; to his mind, artists would "prevail" by embracing such bedrock ideas.

This antithetical completion of Hemingway's novel again suggests Elizabeth Gregory's work with intertextual quotation during the modernist era. As he had done in *The Wild Palms* with the cryptic language of abortion, *matador*, and *aficionados*, Faulkner essentially quoted from *A Farewell to Arms* in his Nobel Prize address to one-up Hemingway. For Gregory, the "dialogic structure" between a text and any work(s) it quotes directly—with or without quotation marks—undergirded much modernist intertextuality, both inter- and intragenerationally.<sup>9</sup> The result of Faulkner's incorporating Hemingway's words verbatim was, as in "Old Man," a similar "dialogic structure" between his speech and Hemingway's novel. One recognizes the broader contextual value Faulkner grafted onto *honor*, *courage*, *sacrifice*, and *glory* by revisiting Frederic's comments about these tropes. As he had done and would do elsewhere—for instance, in his class sessions in Japan and Virginia—Faulkner proposed that Hemingway's art was limited and lacked these core values, here by quoting and thematically completing one of Hemingway's signature novels. Such a swerve, Gregory might argue, shows how a later writer (here, Faulkner) explores "the possibility of reconstitution and redistribution of authority and some measure of originality" vis-à-vis the original work. As did Eliot, Williams, and Moore in their poetry, Faulkner sought "new means to express originality at a point where originality's familiar modes were no longer adequate or appropriate."<sup>10</sup> For him, perhaps, Hemingway's jettisoning of *honor*, *courage*, *sacrifice*, and *glory* in the 1920s was "no longer adequate or appropriate" in the 1950s, when Faulknerian "old verities and

8. Monteiro, "The Faulkner–Hemingway Rivalry," 83.

9. Gregory, 3.

10. *Ibid.*, 2.

truths” promised greater “authority” in the post-World War II era.

Becoming a Nobel laureate emboldened Faulkner to levy a critique of Hemingway in what was the most important speech of his life. He “had always been better at taking chances than at exercising caution. What the Stockholm speech signaled was his readiness to take chances of a different kind”—artistic, personal, and professional, all of which made him look superior.<sup>11</sup> A shorter text situated in a much wider context, the Nobel Prize address was more resonant than *The Wild Palms*. Whereas Faulkner adapted Hemingway’s themes and language in the 1939 novel, the Nobel speech questioned his artistic vision by suggesting—in an international context—that he had marginalized quintessential literary values. Faulkner respected Hemingway as a fellow modernist, yet he again challenged his aesthetic philosophy and implied that his own was greater.

### “Tricks” and “Rhetoric”

Always eager to read Faulkner, Hemingway would indirectly respond to his claims in letters and his own Nobel address. They had sparred in their statements about and allusions to each other since the 1930s; Faulkner’s speech further expanded their relationship’s textual matrix. Although Hemingway was not in Stockholm to hear Faulkner’s address, he read it in the press and had his own ideas about Faulkner, his lofty speech, and their continuing dialectic. Although he saw him as his modernist “brother” (in July 1947, at least) and reservedly praised *The Bear*, *Pylon*, and *Sanctuary*, Hemingway was often harsh toward Faulkner. As one might expect, he was galled by Faulkner’s victory, seen in five of his letters to Harvey Breit and Malcolm Cowley from 1951–1952. Any writer with Hemingway’s intense competitive drive and professional insecurities would be resentful when another author, particularly his chief American rival, became a Nobel laureate first. In the 1950s, Breit became another audience for Hemingway’s feelings about Faulkner. Four months before Faulkner won the Nobel Prize, Hemingway associated their rivalry with the Civil War: “Mary is away settling her parents in Gulfport, Miss. (maybe we can get to write like Bill Faulkner through osmosis although am pretty sure my grandfather kicked the shit out of his grandfather if they ever fought at Shiloh, the Ridge or Chancellorsville [ . . . ] My grandfather was a hard man. [ . . . ]”<sup>12</sup> For Hemingway, it was not enough to duel with Faulkner in their own time; he wanted to feel as hard-

11. Minter, 219.

12. Hemingway, Letter to Harvey Breit, August 14, 1950. ©2012 Printed with the permission of The Ernest Hemingway Foundation.

ened and intimidating as Anson Hemingway was when, or if, the latter faced Faulkner's grandfather, J. W. T. Falkner.

By December 1950, Hemingway's artistic ego was still tender from bad reviews of *Across the River and into the Trees*; hearing that Faulkner was a Nobel laureate could not have helped restore his confidence. As Hemingway wrote Breit on New Year's Day 1951,

Faulkner is a nice guy and I'm pleased he got the prize. Cabled him as soon as I heard. He has this wonderful reputation for modesty. But did you ever notice that he shows up at these literary teas or cocktail parties where he shows how shy and homefolks he is.? If I ever got any such Prize I would thank them politely by cable and not show. That shouldn't outrage them. Who the hell are they anyway? Have handled enough explosives in my time to even have a strong distaste for Alfred Nobel. What was it he did? Mix fuller's earth with nitro-glycerine so that it produced a stable explosive called dynamite and that becomes the criterion of literary achievement. Fuck it. I'll take the new ones. Dynamite is for children. I've crimped enough caps with my teeth to never love Alfred Nobel again.<sup>13</sup>

Hemingway seems jealous of Faulkner, hence his projected disdain for Alfred Nobel and his namesake prize. He is apparently happy that Faulkner won the prize—which he probably was in part—yet he snipes at Faulkner's tendency to feign reticence in public situations while accepting honors. Hemingway seems to be angry with everyone: Faulkner for winning the Nobel; the Nobel committee for not giving *him* the award; and Alfred Nobel for coming up with the prize (and dynamite) in the first place. A handwritten letter to Breit from later in the year shows that Hemingway still resented Faulkner and his achievement:

I read Faulkner's long sentence in the Partizan review and thought it was phony. At the end of a paragraph he just puts a colon instead of a period. Then he starts another sentence. And the repetition and the beating [about?] the head with that same bunch of Indians in parenthesis [leaving?] town in an abortion of all grammar and for where? Why doesn't somebody ever get out of that county and come alive elsewhere? I think the county is fine but it bores the shit out of me, Lieutenant. It must be nice to have received the Nobel prize and then to write any sort of shit and be treated respectfully.<sup>14</sup>

13. Hemingway, Letter to Harvey Breit, January 1, 1951. ©2012 Printed with the permission of The Ernest Hemingway Foundation.

14. Hemingway, Letter to Harvey Breit, October 23, 1951. ©2012 Printed with the permission of The Ernest Hemingway Foundation.



As Faulkner the Nobel laureate was increasingly heralded, Hemingway continued to vent his ire to Breit, almost humorously noting Faulkner's apparent grammatical ignorance, limited setting and characters, and artificial style. He also asserts what he sees as Faulkner's limitations, riposting Faulkner's Ole Miss comments about his own artistic restrictiveness. Hemingway fires back with a similar declaration of what he saw as Faulkner's limits—specifically, the “same bunch of Indians” confined to one boredom-inducing “county” in such stories as “Red Leaves,” “A Justice,” “The Old People,” “A Courtship,” and other works featuring Chickasaw Indians.

The next year, Hemingway wrote a few more letters to Breit in which he mentioned Faulkner and the Nobel Prize, unconsciously revealing his growing inferiority complex. In June, while finishing up *The Old Man and the Sea*, Hemingway wrote

But I hope you and Charlie [Scribner?] will feel good you stuck around when I was being buried under Wasted Talents etc. and other friends were getting big dynamite prizes. When I heard about the prize I sent a very pleased cable of congratulations but never had any acknowledgement. Then when I read the speech at Stockholm, which was excellent but a little florid, I thought I will be a sad son of a bitch if I can't write a better book than he writes a speech. It is nice to talk about it and hard to write it without tricks. Bite on the nail Hemingstein you un-prized, non-academied son of a bitch and let's see if you can really write and how far you can take it.<sup>15</sup>

Hemingway tried to use the award to motivate his own writing, yet again indicating a mutual psychological exchange. Feeling outdone by Faulkner, Hemingway wanted to channel his frustration into productivity while he was finishing *The Old Man and the Sea* and working on other, though ultimately unfinished, projects. Faulkner's accomplishment put a creative charge into Hemingway to write a book more experimental and genuine than Faulkner's speech.

Despite feeling motivated by Faulkner's success to reestablish his own place in American letters, Hemingway was not done. He seemed to take a certain pleasure in directing such “attacks of spleen” in Faulkner's direction.<sup>16</sup> Troubled by a comment that Faulkner made about him (which I will discuss in the next section) Hemingway wrote to Breit on June 27 that Faulkner

15. Hemingway, Letter to Harvey Breit, June 23, 1952. ©2012 Printed with the permission of The Ernest Hemingway Foundation.

16. Mellow, 582.

spoke well of me once, as you wrote me. But that was before he was given the Nobel Prize. When I read he had won that, I sent him as good a cable of congratulations as I know how to write. He never acknowledged it. For years I had built him up in Europe. Any time anyone asked me who was the best American writer I told them Faulkner. Everytime anyone wanted me to talk about me I would talk about him. I thought he had a rotten deal and I did everything I knew to see he got a better shake. I never told people he couldn't go nine innings, nor why, nor what I knew was wrong with him since always.

[ . . . ] He made a speech, very good. I knew he could never, now, or ever again write up to his speech. I also knew I could write a book better and straighter than his speech and without tricks nor rhetoric.

[ . . . . ]

You see what happens with Bill Faulkner is that as long as I am alive he has to drink to feel good about having the Nobel prize. He does not realize that I have no respect for that institution and was truly happy for him when he got it. I cabled him how pleased I was truly and he would not answer.<sup>17</sup>

Embittered by Faulkner's Nobel Prize, Hemingway painted him as an artist with a drinking problem—presumably one of his faults. He reveals the impact of Faulkner's recent success, again proclaiming that he could write a book that would eclipse his adversary's speech. Conversely, though, Hemingway imputes to Faulkner an awareness of his eminence. That Faulkner apparently took solace in alcohol to enjoy the Nobel Prize and deal with Hemingway's presence suggests, in the latter's mind, that Faulkner was concerned about his stature and psychocompetitive influence. Arguably, Faulkner was concerned with Hemingway; he spent a fair amount of time alluding to and implicitly disparaging Hemingway, more so than Dos Passos, Steinbeck, Fitzgerald, or any other contemporary. He often saw himself as "the best in America, by God" as he wrote Robert Haas in 1939, but he seems to have seen Hemingway as his most formidable competition, given his extended treatment of him.<sup>18</sup> Both seemed to feel an influence-anxiety, Hemingway more acutely as the rivalry persisted. In the above and other letters, Hemingway strives to separate himself from Faulkner by disparaging the Nobel organization and self-pityingly envisioning himself as a man apart who could outwrite a Nobel Prize winner.

17. Hemingway, *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters*, 769. Hemingway mentioned sending a congratulatory telegram several times, but no telegram is quoted in Blotner's biography, his collection of Faulkner's letters, Karl's or Parini's biographies, or any published Hemingway biography; no telegram seems to be in the Outgoing Correspondence files of the Hemingway Collection at the Kennedy Library. Archival research in the Faulkner collections in Virginia and Mississippi could unearth it, but Faulkner seems not to have made note of, replied to, or kept a telegram from Hemingway.

18. Faulkner, *Selected Letters of William Faulkner*, 113.

Like Breit, Malcolm Cowley was very aware of Hemingway's resentment of Faulkner; on November 9, 1952, Hemingway wrote to Cowley, noting that:

You know publishing a book is about the most destructive activity that a writer can engage in except, possibly, receiving the Nobel prize. No one has ever yet, to my knowledge, written anything worth reading after taking that dynamite money. I'm awfully glad they gave it to a Frenchman [François Mauriac, 1952] because only they can re-act to it properly. Did you read Mauriac's words to the press? It should go either to a Frenchman or to one of those old Southern bards from the cane-brake aristocracy. Faulkner certainly made a magnificent speech and then wrote *Requiem For a Nun*. Maybe it would have been sounder to read them *Requiem* and put them to sleep for keeps and then have written the speech or a book as good as the speech. Think the last plan would be best.<sup>19</sup>

Ever familiar with Faulkner's work and eager to criticize it, Hemingway again faults what he sees as a grandiloquent, somnolent style. Further disassociating himself from the Nobel Prize, Hemingway wants to see it as the end of the laureate's creativity, since apparently no writers had matched their previous output. That Hemingway thought the award was a swan song was another way Faulkner's victory spurred his own creativity. As he saw it, he had a chance to reclaim literary prominence, since Faulkner's creativity was, he hoped, exhausted.

More broadly, these five letters from 1951–1952 demonstrate how Faulkner's winning the Nobel Prize distressed Hemingway. Whether he was agitated by Faulkner winning the prize first or winning it period is not entirely clear from these letters; what is clear is that Hemingway was humbled, bitter, and even self-pitying when Faulkner was ranked above him. Despite his apparent admiration of some of Faulkner's work—except *Requiem for a Nun*—he wanted to believe that Faulkner would not write anything significant after winning the prize. Yet, this statement must have boomeranged painfully after he won the prize in 1954 and published virtually nothing after. To Hemingway's vexation, Faulkner published much fiction after 1950: *Requiem for a Nun*, *A Fable*, *Big Woods*, *The Town*, *The Mansion*, and *The Reivers*. Faulkner won more awards after becoming a Nobel laureate, including two Pulitzer Prizes (*A Fable* and *The Reivers*), two National Book Awards (*Collected Stories* and *A Fable*), and the Gold Medal for Fiction from the National Institute of Arts and Letters. With the exception of the Pulitzer

19. Hemingway, Letter to Malcolm Cowley, November 9, 1952. ©2012 Printed with the permission of The Ernest Hemingway Foundation.

Prize for *The Reivers* and the Gold Medal for Fiction—both awarded in 1962, a year after his death—Hemingway saw Faulkner’s creativity and acclaim only bolstered by the Nobel Prize.

### *Writing vs. Speaking*

Four years after Faulkner called on writers to use the words that Frederic Henry wanted to abandon, Hemingway resumed their debate about the Nobel Prize in late 1954, when its pendulum finally swung toward him on October 28. Shortly after the announcement, Breit called to congratulate him and get material for a *Times Book Review* piece, “The Sun Also Rises in Stockholm” (November 7). Because he viewed Faulkner so contemptuously, Hemingway wove criticisms of his apparent rhetoric, trickery, and floridity into his own speech, which he wanted to eclipse Faulkner’s in impact and honesty. Feeling a sense of superiority, Hemingway pushed himself to write a more straightforward speech, further fueling their cycle of influence and exchange. Read in tandem with Hemingway’s letters to Breit and Cowley, Breit’s article anticipates Hemingway’s speech, because he commented on his own writing, the duties of a writer, past and present writers, and Faulkner himself.

Professionally confident after finally being awarded the world’s highest literary honor, Hemingway referred to Faulkner’s 1947 ranking, speech, and his own resentment in the interview. Asked about the role of criticism, he hinted at Faulkner: “I believe the microphone is one of the greatest enemies of literature, of letters, and that a man should try to imply or show in his written words what he believes, rather than put it into speeches or discourses.”<sup>20</sup> Hemingway is not only referencing Faulkner here—he had grudges against numerous critics and reviewers who had panned his work—but he evokes Faulkner’s impromptu ranking and Nobel speech. His own intense publicity notwithstanding, Hemingway disliked writers—Faulkner among them—who to his mind spoke more than they wrote, particularly when their spoken words denigrated him, whether in Oxford or Stockholm.

Hemingway was more sardonic when he echoed the universalistic claims of Faulkner’s Nobel Prize address, again obliquely: “I do not know what Man (with a capital M) means. I do know what a man (small m) is. I do know what man (with a small m) means and I hope I have learned something about men (small m) and something about women and something about animals.”<sup>21</sup> Though the text of Faulkner’s speech does not capitalize *man*, he clearly

20. Qtd. in Brucoli, *Conversations with Ernest Hemingway*, 77–78.

21. *Ibid.*, 78.

meant *Man*, on which Hemingway riffs. Just as he had done two decades before in his punning reference to *Pylon* in “On Being Shot Again,” he plays with Faulkner’s language and offers a thinly veiled criticism. His assessment of Faulkner—as speaking rather than writing his ideas, and as preferring *Man* over *man*—would underpin his speech, which he wrote in the weeks that followed Breit’s article. Moreover, Breit implies a linkage between Hemingway and Faulkner in this article; for him, Hemingway’s influence was vast: “He became the most influential and most imitated writer. He dared deal (without saying so in speech or discourse) with what Faulkner has called ‘the eternal verities of the heart.’”<sup>22</sup> In this piece and in letters to both authors, Breit noted their many similarities, such hunting, nature, drinking, and vast literary influence. He, like Cowley, saw significant links between the two Nobel laureates, perhaps sensing that Faulkner’s and Hemingway’s words and ideas resonated because of their rivalry and shared influence.

Breit’s brief article ended the interlude between both Nobel Prize addresses. Soon after “The Sun Also Rises in Stockholm” was printed, Hemingway entered the conversation in a more dramatic, outspoken fashion in his own Nobel Prize address, which he wrote but did not deliver himself. Still recovering from severe injuries from his two plane crashes earlier in the year, he was physically and emotionally drained, and had always claimed that he would only send his thanks to the Nobel Committee by cable. John A. Cabot, the American Ambassador to Sweden, read Hemingway’s speech on December 10, 1954, four years to the day after Faulkner gave his speech. Michael Reynolds suggests that the “Nobel Prize lottery” was a creative “distraction” for Hemingway (even though his only competition was Iceland’s Halldór Laxness), that it was his near-death experience in Africa that had finally tipped the Nobel’s scales in his favor, and that some of the committee had regretted not yet having awarded him the prize: “None of which Hemingway found particularly flattering. If the ‘academy’ that had passed him by so often had to choose only between some Icelandic bard and himself, it was not a field to be proud about, and if they were giving him the medal because he came close to dying, well, to hell with that.”<sup>23</sup> Hemingway isolated himself but enjoyed the Nobel with “jubilation”: he “had coveted the Nobel Prize but always denied wanting it. He made a point of ridiculing the prize itself and, generally, those who had received it,”<sup>24</sup> but did not go so far as to reject it as Sartre would do in 1964.

In sharp contrast to the confident, elevated tone of Faulkner’s address, Hemingway’s speech exuded (genuine?) humility and understatement. Like

22. Ibid., 79.

23. Reynolds, *Hemingway: The Final Years*, 282.

24. Mellow, 588.

Faulkner, he addressed more general matters that had bearing on the twentieth-century artist—the need for creativity, the potential for immortality through art, and an understanding of past writers' accomplishments. By proxy, Hemingway responded to Faulkner's earlier criticisms in front of a similarly vast audience to rebut Faulkner's derision of his ideas and to defend his own work. Having now belatedly scored his own victory, Hemingway acted accordingly. For him, Faulkner favored the elevated and rhetorical over the direct and minimalist, leading Hemingway to reemphasize his art's core values in his speech.

Faulkner's presence in Hemingway's speech is clear from the first sentence: "Having no facility for speech-making and no command of oratory nor any domination of rhetoric, I wish to thank the administrators of the generosity of Alfred Nobel for this prize."<sup>25</sup> Hemingway omits here his past antipathy toward Nobel and his prize. His emotional state was in flux after receiving the Nobel: happy to be so honored, he was worried that the prize would mark the end of his significant productivity, as he said—and hoped—it would for others. While the Nobel Prize put him on a par with Faulkner, Sinclair Lewis, and other laureates, he had to be worried that he could not keep pace with them since he felt the Nobel Prize sounded the death knell of productivity. After winning the Nobel, he was at work on a number of projects but published no books, in stark contrast to Faulkner, whom he saw publish at least three books between 1954 and 1961. One of Hemingway's late projects was his African manuscript, published in 2005 as *Under Kilimanjaro*, in which he associates the Nobel Prize with "rummyhood" and "oratory"—directly that of Winston Churchill, perhaps indirectly that of Faulkner. "I was simply trying to step up my drinking to a reasonable amount when I might win the Prize myself; who knows?"<sup>26</sup>

One of Hemingway's exemplars of "rummyhood," seen in letters discussed below, Faulkner is symbolically present at the end of Hemingway's speech: "I have spoken too long for a writer. A writer should write what he has to say and not speak it."<sup>27</sup> Reynolds has correctly called this and other comments "barbs beneath [the speech's] seemingly simple surface," given how Faulkner alluded to Hemingway in his speech and how the latter riposted in his.<sup>28</sup> As he often did in his fiction, Hemingway chose a non-Faulknerian stylistic route for his speech. From the beginning, he distances himself from the "facility for speech-making," "command of oratory," and "domination of rhetoric" that Faulkner seems to have mastered. His own lack of "oratory"

25. Hemingway, "Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech," 196.

26. Hemingway, *Under Kilimanjaro*, 204.

27. Hemingway, "Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech," 196.

28. Reynolds, *Hemingway: The Final Years*, 283.

and “rhetoric” was, to his mind, a mark of superiority, as were his directness, control, concision, and misleading simplicity.

Hemingway subtly takes issue with Faulkner’s proclamation that “the problems of the human heart in conflict with itself” are the writer’s domain, swerving from *heart* to state his case. Hemingway avoided such broadness and generalization, opting instead for the concrete, “real thing” as articulated in *Death in the Afternoon*. As he writes in his speech, “It would be impossible for me to ask the Ambassador of my country to read a speech in which a writer said all of the things which are in his heart”—what is “impossible” for Hemingway was Faulkner’s paradigm. By this implication, “rhetoric” and “oratory” are required for writers who say “all of the things” that are in their hearts but needlessly complicate their work in the process. While Faulkner saw much aesthetic value in rhetorical abstraction, Hemingway saw greater value in an anti-rhetorical art. Whereas Faulkner antithetically took up the four ideas that Hemingway shunned in *A Farewell to Arms* to express his perceived “problems of the human heart,” Hemingway’s speech and ideas oppose Faulkner’s while reaffirming the ideas that he questioned. Hemingway had his own agenda, one that embraced simplicity and understatement, values that he had cherished since his days in Paris in the 1920s.

Hemingway’s speech also enacts a professional separation, and not just because he did not deliver it himself. As he had done in letters to Breit and Cowley, Hemingway projected himself as a psychologically separate writer, his celebrity status notwithstanding. The image of the writer as solitary, tortured genius pervades the speech:

Writing, at its best, is a lonely life. Organizations for writers palliate the writer’s loneliness but I doubt if they improve his writing. He grows in public stature as he sheds his loneliness and often his work deteriorates.

[ . . . . ]

It is because we have had such great writers in the past that a writer is driven far out past where he can go, out to where no one can help him.<sup>29</sup>

Hemingway’s speech seeks a level of remove from the writing world that had recently bestowed the same prize upon Faulkner but that had, to his mind, heretofore neglected him. Hemingway used his own award to offer a competing vision for the modern artist, one that sketched the artist as separate from the writing world at large and its perceived preference for rhetoric, literary trickery, and overstatement.

29. Hemingway, “Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech,” 196.

*Enduring vs. Prevailing*

Although both mature modernists criticized each other in their speeches, there are some parallels suggestive of common artistic ground. Both speeches insist on the need for creativity. Faulkner refers to his “life’s work in the agony and sweat of the human spirit [ . . . ] to create out of the materials of the human spirit something which did not exist before”;<sup>30</sup> Hemingway stresses: “For a true writer each book should be a new beginning where he tries again for something that is beyond attainment. He should always try for something that has never been done or that others have tried and failed.”<sup>31</sup> Both linked art and immortality. For Faulkner, “man” was “immortal,” and the “poet’s voice” could “be one of the props, the pillars to help him endure and prevail.”<sup>32</sup> For Hemingway, “[t]hings may not be immediately discernible in what a man writes, and in this sometimes he is fortunate; but eventually they are quite clear and by these and the degree of alchemy that he possesses he will endure or be forgotten.”<sup>33</sup> Here, prevailing and enduring are tantamount to the writer’s eternity. For both Nobel laureates, the artist who has created valid work will be remembered, written about, and canonized long after the works are published and the writers themselves are dead.

Their philosophical similarities aside, their speeches again engage dialectically. Both authors equate endurance or prevalence with artistic perpetuity, but *to endure* and *to prevail* are not equivalent. Inarguably, the words are related—enduring can lead to prevailing—but have different connotations. For Faulkner, “man will not merely endure: he will prevail,” as quoted above. For Faulkner, “merely” enduring is lesser than prevailing, and, by extension, Hemingway’s depiction of the stoical endurance of Jake Barnes, Robert Jordan, and other characters is not as important as their dignifiedly overcoming adversity. Although few of Faulkner’s characters definitively prevail over the cruelties of the modern South—perhaps Isaac McCaslin, Bayard Sartoris (of *The Unvanquished*), and the tall convict (of “Old Man”)—Faulkner himself seems to have preferred prevalence over endurance at the philosophical level, at least through the prism of his Nobel Prize address. Yet, we should remember that endurance was key to Faulkner’s vision; the last line of *The Sound and the Fury*’s 1946 Appendix—“They endured”—describes Dilsey, perhaps the book’s strongest character whose endurance represents African Americans more broadly.<sup>34</sup> Endurance was part of Faulkner’s vision, but less so than prevalence. He valued both, incorporating them into his

30. Faulkner, “Address upon Receiving the Nobel Prize for Literature,” 119.

31. Hemingway, “Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech,” 196.

32. Faulkner, “Address upon Receiving the Nobel Prize for Literature,” 120.

33. Hemingway, “Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech,” 196.

34. Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury*, 215.



fiction, but in his persona as Nobel laureate he privileged the former while taking Hemingway to task for privileging the latter.

Hemingway's choice *to endure* again sets his ideas against Faulkner's. For Hemingway's characters, facing physical and mental struggles stoically supersedes victory or defeat. For instance, both Harry Morgan and Thomas Hudson die at the end of their respective novels, but Hemingway highlights the set of codes and values by which they endured through their lives. Fred-eric Henry's life is also rather poignant—having lost his love and their child during what he sees as a senseless war—yet he tries to live his life gracefully under the intense pressures of the First World War's dying days, as well as after in his retrospective narration. While Faulkner's speech accepted endurance as a secondary piece of his larger aesthetic design, Hemingway placed endurance at the core of his speech and aesthetic sensibility, thus reemphasizing what he saw as the greater importance of endurance. In terms of writing style (verbosity vs. terseness), characterization (community vs. individual), and lifestyle (relative privacy vs. intense publicity), Faulkner and Hemingway were often foils, even *doppelgänger*s;<sup>35</sup> their Nobel Prize addresses embodied a linguistic opposition both denotatively and connotatively, figuratively similar to the authors themselves.

Despite their differences and digs at each other in their speeches, Faulkner and Hemingway were both devoted craftsmen. For them, creative art became immortal art, such literature enabling artists and readers to either "endure" or "prevail," semantics aside. The contrapuntal interaction between these two Nobel Prize addresses is nuanced, as is the exchange between virtually all Faulkner–Hemingway intertexts. The call-and-response dynamic between Faulkner's speech and Hemingway's novel and speech, for Monteiro, expressed their "increasingly bitter competition for primacy, fame, and honor."<sup>36</sup> Because his speech was first, Faulkner initiated the use of the Nobel address as a means of disparaging Hemingway; however, Hemingway eagerly followed suit in his own. Faulkner's Nobel Prize brought about influence-anxiety in Hemingway, who saw the prize as motivation to expand his own writing and thus retake the limelight. The latter's international acceptance, concomitant with his own personal and writing problems, made Hemingway more anxious to use Faulkner's speech and success to reinvigorate his own writing. Theirs was a marked psychocompetitive exchange born out of their competitiveness vis-à-vis each other—their individual writings (including their Nobel Prize addresses) and literary sensibilities were strongly informed and molded by their frequent efforts to outdo each

35. Cf., Rovit, "The Hemingway–Faulkner Generation."

36. Monteiro, "The Contest between Faulkner and Hemingway."

other, as oftentimes happens between rivaling writers, musicians, artists, and other creative figures, despite some similar ideas. This had become a familiar pattern: referring to and praising one another, yet swerving from what the other had written into a potentially better direction. Reading their Nobel Prize addresses in a point-counterpoint manner telescopes their differing aesthetics: grandiose and generalized, or understated and individualized. These speeches offer different paths to the modern artist—toward abstraction or concreteness, overstatement or understatement, confidence or humility in the tone of the Nobel Prize speech—the very paths that two of America’s twentieth-century Nobel laureates followed while being hyper-aware of and competitive with each other.

### DOCTORS, LAWYERS, AND WOLVES

As we have seen, Hemingway’s correspondence revealed a strong competitive awareness of Faulkner in the 1930s and 1940s; his resentment peaked between 1951 and 1954, when Faulkner was the only Nobel laureate between the two. A handful of letters from the early 1950s further demonstrate Hemingway’s wounded artistic ego—as do his comments about *Requiem for a Nun* and *A Fable*, both of which were published between their Nobel Prizes. Faulkner’s presence on the American literary scene weighed heavily on Hemingway. Faulkner did not hold Hemingway in as much contempt as Hemingway did him, but even his positive comments—a defense of *Across the River and into the Trees* and review of *The Old Man and the Sea*—seemed aloof, equivocal, and mildly patronizing. They were still locked in competition, but Faulkner was putting distance between them in his own mind, possibly in the literary establishment’s as well. In his vulnerable periods, Hemingway felt similarly resentful-but-volatile while still seeing Faulkner be overly “prolific” and tell stories “baldly,” as he noted in *Death in the Afternoon* two decades earlier.



A particularly complex episode stemmed from a simple request that Breit made of Faulkner. They met in New York after Faulkner returned from Europe in 1952, and Breit asked him to review *The Old Man and the Sea* for the *Times Book Review*. The task was uncomplicated, and a *Times* review would allow Faulkner to voice his opinion of—and maybe take a swing at—Hemingway’s newest work. Faulkner, however, turned down Breit’s offer but took the page proofs back to Mississippi anyway. Upon his return to

Oxford, he wrote a statement about Hemingway and sent it to Saxe Commins, then his editor at Random House, who passed the note on to Breit. Having already written a letter to *Time* in 1950 praising Hemingway and his work (which I discuss below), Faulkner wrote to Breit on June 20, 1952, to reiterate his ostensibly positive message. Curiously, he did not read the text before commenting on Hemingway:

A few years ago, I forget what the occasion was, Hemingway said that writers should stick together just as doctors and lawyers and wolves do. I think there is more wit in that than truth or necessity either, at least in Hemingway's case, since the sort of writers who need to band together willy nilly or perish, resemble the wolves who are wolves only in pack, and, singly, are just another dog.

[ . . . . ]

So he does not need even this from another writer. Maybe he doesn't even want it. So he gets this for free from one who, regardless of how he rated what remained, has never doubted the integrity of it, and who has always affirmed that no man will be quicker and harsher to judge what remained than the man who wrote *MEN WITHOUT WOMEN* and *THE SUN ALSO RISES* and *A FAREWELL TO ARMS* and *FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS* and the best of the African stuff and most of the rest of it; and that if even what remained had not been as honest and true as he could make it, then he himself would have burned the manuscript before the publisher ever saw it.

Albeit elliptically, Faulkner lauds Hemingway, proclaiming that he is a good enough writer to stand on his own, be immune from reviewers' attacks, and "needs no pack protection" because his work was strong enough to speak for itself.<sup>37</sup> Faulkner had not read *The Old Man and the Sea* before writing these remarks, most likely since he did not have—or make?—time to read it after returning to Oxford. The novel is so short that he conceivably could have read the proofs on the way back to Mississippi. He may have felt threatened or bothered by the new Hemingway novel, or that a review would distract from his own work, as he had felt in 1946 when Random House considered having Hemingway write the introduction for *The Portable Faulkner*. Faulkner felt, as he told Saxe Commins on June 22, that Hemingway should tone down his publicity, take up a different line of work, and write as more of a hobby—all of which Faulkner felt that he himself did as an ostensible farmer and paterfamilias who also wrote.<sup>38</sup> Because he either did not read or admit to having

37. Faulkner, *Selected Letters of William Faulkner*, 333–34.

38. Parini, 349.

read the text, Faulkner focuses more on Hemingway's "integrity" and dedication to publishing work that was inherently "honest and true" ("if even what remained"). Although he seems to compliment Hemingway, Faulkner does so backhandedly. To his mind, Hemingway's remark was witty but not necessarily truthful, "most of" his work is strong, and he himself found some work substandard ("regardless of how he [Faulkner] rated what remained"). There is a decided note of superiority in Faulkner's seeing himself a worthy judge to defend a writer who did not "need" or "want" his defense, due in part to the Nobel Prize. Hemingway would notice and then resent this after reading Faulkner's comments.

The "occasion" that Faulkner forgot was "Hemingway in the Afternoon" (*Time*, August 4, 1947), which was published in the wake of Faulkner's controversial ranking at the University of Mississippi. Asked "Which once-prominent [writers] have slipped or failed to measure up to early promise?" Hemingway responded as follows:

Prefer not to answer that question. A writer has no more right to inform the public of the weaknesses and strengths of his fellow professionals than a doctor or a lawyer has.

Writers should stick together like wolves or gypsies and they are fools to attack each other to please the people who would exploit or destroy them. Naturally I know the weaknesses of my fellow professionals but that information is not for sale nor for free.<sup>39</sup>

Hemingway's idea that writers should "stick together" is problematic, since he never stayed with one writer for long before a rift would develop, such as those between him and Fitzgerald, Dos Passos, and Stein. His comment about discerning his peers' shortcomings could, to an extent, be seen as a slight toward Faulkner, who had pointed out the weaknesses of Hemingway, Dos Passos, and Steinbeck some four months earlier. Because he was paid for his appearance at Ole Miss, Faulkner had, in Hemingway's view, sold such professional secrets.

Soon after Breit received Faulkner's cryptic statement, he forwarded it to Hemingway. Still anxious about not yet having won the Nobel Prize and about feeling second to Faulkner, he wrote at least five letters to Breit between June 27 and August 23. Breit began the tense exchange on June 25, relating "something of a complicated story" from when he had met Faulkner in New York; Breit had envisioned "some sort of a dialogue" between Faulkner and the *Times* reviewer about Hemingway. He included Faulkner's statement and

39. Bruccoli, *Conversations with Ernest Hemingway*, 50–51.

wondered, “It is the most definitive remark Faulkner ever made on another writer, don’t you think?” Breit then asked,

What do you think about all this? You are not involved in my enterprises, you have no responsibility for them; it is something I wanted. But I wonder about how you think about it because I would like to do what you would like, if you have any preference. Or nothing at all. I could just hold it, and thank Faulkner for the statement, and forget. It’s interesting though, and though you probably don’t need anything like this it’s damned interesting and exciting to have Faulkner say something about Hemingway.<sup>40</sup>

*Damned interesting and exciting*, indeed. As Breit outlines elsewhere in this letter, he had several possibilities for the statement: using it in the *Book Review* as a sidebar to Orville Prescott’s review; incorporating it into an article he was writing for *The Nation*; offering it to Scribners; or just filing it away. Breit does not seem to have wanted to foment trouble, and the presumed “dialogue” again suggests his awareness of the strong links between both authors, something he shared with Cowley. In this letter, Breit also refers to a “brief adventure” that involved himself, Faulkner, and Truman Capote. In the winter of 1950—when *Cosmopolitan* was beginning to serialize *Across the River and into the Trees*—Breit, Faulkner, and Capote were in New York; during a cab ride, Capote disparaged what he had read of the novel. Faulkner pulled rank: “‘Young man,’ he said, ‘I haven’t read this new one. And though it may not be the best thing Hemingway ever wrote, I know it will be carefully done, and it will have quality.’”<sup>41</sup> Breit must have known that Hemingway’s blood would boil when he read Faulkner’s assessment of his work—maybe this was Breit’s way of bringing a “dialogue” between Faulkner and Hemingway to the *Book Review*, but Hemingway wanted no part of any such civil public exchange.

Indeed, Hemingway’s blood did boil. Despite the somewhat laudatory tone of Faulkner’s message, Hemingway misread it. Feeling slighted by critical reviews of the novel or by Faulkner’s defense of him, and partially due to his own misprision, Hemingway found the letter unprofessional. He viewed Faulkner so contemptuously, and enviously, that he never wanted to accept any compliments. The statement likely reminded Hemingway of the fourth-place ranking, which he interpreted as an accusation of cowardice and implication of Faulkner’s superiority. Hemingway was so riled up that he wrote to Breit twice in three days. In two long letters from June 27 and

40. Breit, Letter to Ernest Hemingway, June 25, 1952.

41. Qtd. in Blotner, *Faulkner*, 514.

29, he sounded off loudly about Faulkner, critiquing his statement, work, and excessive drinking. In the June 27 letter, part of which I discussed above, Hemingway wrote: "Faulkner in that very strange statement acts as though I had asked him for help (being a dog) and he was kind enough to say I didn't need it really. This is damned nice of him." Furthermore:

Thanks for sending me the Faulkner quote. He did not forget what the occasion was that I wrote him that. He remembers it very well. In one of his rummy moments (I hope) he had said, flatly, that I was a coward. [ . . . ] [Buck Lanham and I] both received apologies from Faulkner who wrote that I had not the courage to experiment or take a chance in writing etc. (See Requiem for a Nun on how to take a chance when rum dumb.) No criticism on personal courage.

I wrote Faulkner a friendly letter which he quotes and now says "resemble the wolves who are wolves only in pack, and singly, are just another Dog." [ . . . ]

He writes this *without* having read the book which you asked him if he wanted to review. It adds up to a very strange statement. Maybe I am just a sore-headed, touchy bastard. I know that I am sometimes and I deplore it. But why couldn't he just say he wasn't writing reviews or was disqualified [ . . . ]. Why the strange statement as though I needed defence and was *not* really a dog? He even got involved in repetition in the second and third paragraphs of that statement.

You asked me what I think of all this. This is how: I don't want any part of Faulkner's statement. He is a good writer when he is good and could be better than anyone if he knew how to finish a book and didn't get that old heat prostration like Honest Sugar Ray at the end. I enjoy reading him when he is good but always feel like hell that he is not better. I wish him luck and he needs it because he has the one great and un-curable defect; you can't re-read him. When you re-read him you are conscious [ . . . ] of how he fooled you the first time. In truly good writing no matter how many times you read it you do not know how it is done. That is because there is a mystery in all great writing and that mystery does not dis-sect out. It continues and is always valid. Each time you re-read you see or learn something new. You do not just see the mechanics of how you were tricked in the first place. Bill had some of this at one time. But it is long gone. [ . . . ]

Please do not speak about any of this to Faulkner. [ . . . ] But to make statements *without* reading it is chicken. But I want no quarrel nor trouble with him and I wish him luck and hope Anomatopeio County will last as long as the Sea. I wouldn't trade him counties. But he picked his. I feel cramped in a

county, any county. But he has done a damned good job on his and I hope it always keeps him happy and satisfied.<sup>42</sup>

Although he misremembers the “wolves” quote—he did not write it in either of the letters to Faulkner in July 1947—Hemingway was cross. Faulkner had struck a nerve, hence the litany of complaints about his being dumbled by alcohol, cowardly, and writing about a claustrophobic, pun-worthy county. As always, Hemingway qualified his praise of the author who would be more enjoyable except for his inability to complete his novels well and ability to trick his readers, or so Hemingway has it. He is also disingenuous—he may have wanted nothing to do with Faulkner or his statement, but the hostility of this and many letters belie his call for peace.

Not surprisingly, Hemingway would say more of the same about Faulkner. The statement “puzzles me more all the time,” he wrote Breit on June 29:

It really does sound as though he considered that he had been asked to speak well of something worthless by someone who could no longer write and he was, instead, making just as noble a statement about the poor chap as his conscience would allow.

In the first place take the wolf part. Surely he has never seen a wolf in wild state or he would know that he is nothing like a dog. No one would ever mistake him for a dog and the wolf knows he [is] not a dog and he does not have to be in a pack to give him dignity nor confidence. He is hunted by everyone. Everyone is against him and he is on his own as an artist is. My idea [is] that wolves should not, and in the wild state never would, hunt each other.

[ . . . . ]

If he would even read this book he probably wouldn't understand it because his fish is the cat-fish and he would probably think that no big channel catfish would do that so A. It isn't true. B. Since it isn't about the County it isn't either interesting or important.

I get fed on that County sometimes. Anything that needs genealogical tables to explain it is a little bit like James Branch Cabell. [ . . . ] As it was it was damned good but as always I felt the lack of discipline and of character and the boozy courage of corn whiskey. When I read Faulkner I can tell exactly when he gets tired and does it on corn [ . . . ]. But that is one of the things I thought writers should not tell out-siders. It is not a question of log-rolling or speaking well of each other. It is a question of knowing what is wrong with a guy and still sticking with what is good in him and not letting the out-siders in on *secrets professionnel*.

42. Hemingway, *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters*, 768–70.

Maybe that is what he was trying to do in that statement. But it was complicated by so many other things. What got me was that he believed the majority criticism and thought that I was through and that he was being asked to help me out. Maybe because he had won the Nobel prize. It sure was a busher's reaction.<sup>43</sup>

For Hemingway, Faulkner had broken a code among writers. Feeling that Faulkner publicized his apparent faults, he shares his sense of Faulkner's with Breit: an ignorance of wolves, alcoholic bravado (again conflating personal weaknesses with writing), and his lengthy sentences. Spotlighting Faulkner's weakness, Hemingway blasts him from a number of angles—among them his alcoholism, style, and epic scope. While he is exaggerating Faulkner's boldness in suggesting that he was washed-up, Hemingway correlated the "noble" comments and the Nobel Prize, the latter of which made him seem superior.

Of further importance to this June 29 letter is a substantial portion (both typed and handwritten) that is not in Baker's *Selected Letters* but that is in a second copy of the letter in the Hemingway Collection at the Kennedy Library.<sup>44</sup> This additional material shows us Hemingway's anger and jealousy even more clearly than the published version. Between the paragraph that ends "it isn't either interesting or important" and the one that opens "I get fed on that County sometimes," much is absent from Baker's version, including an anecdote about Hemingway and James Joyce discussing African hunting. After noting "the chicken quality of [Faulkner's] 'statement,'" Hemingway sounds off. The typewritten portion reads as follows:

I'm almost certainly unfair to Faulkner but I think he talks a better book than he writes now and I would rather see him write a good book than make such a nobel speech and then come through with a sequel to a book he said he wrote as a pot-boiler. I took Sanctuary down the coast the last time and when I was out of reading it still was almost impossible to re-read. As I Lay Dying stands up the best maybe. It and parts of Pylon. About eight altogether of the stories stand up. That longest sentence in Requiem doesn't

43. Ibid., 771–72.

44. According to the Kennedy Library, there are two copies of this letter in the Hemingway Collection—the shorter version published by Baker was originally housed at Harvard's Houghton Library, while the longer version quoted here was originally in possession of the Kennedy Library. Both versions of the letter were listed in the Hemingway Collection's catalog (1982). My thanks go to Alyssa Pacy of the Kennedy Library, who cleared up this matter for me in an email on June 1, 2005.



stand up because it isn't a true sentence. He just omitted the periods at the end of various sentences. It is damned good. But it is not one long sentence. Anyway if you have to write the longest sentence in the world to give a book distinction the next thing you should hire Bill Veek and use midgets. I remember writing a long sentence once in Green Hills of Africa about the Gulf Stream. But I remember how it just got started and went on and I ended it the first place the sentence ended. I suppose what Bill meant that I had no courage to take a chance in writing would be that I would not write a whole book consisting of one sentence or something like that.

Actually I have too much respect for the English language. It is a wonderful thing to be able to work with. Sometimes we have had to perform certain operations on it that may have been good for it or bad for it. But I respect it and myself too much to operate on it, or anything else, while drunk.

Hemingway was so incensed that he handwrote an addendum after he finished typing, though he never needed much prompting to disparage Faulkner:

Tell him to stick his statement up his Mississippi ass and to bite on his solid gold medal and see if it tastes any better than the iron nail we bite on every morning when we go to work. [ . . . ]

You do anything you want with the statement, Harvey. And I'm not being rude to *you*. But tell Faulkner, for me, to stick it[.]

[ . . . . ]

We'll just try and not let the heat affect us as it did Honest Sugar Ray.<sup>45</sup>

Hemingway's deep-seated resentment of Faulkner informs virtually every criticism in this lengthy letter, whether about his Nobel Prize, verbosity, drinking, or attitude toward Hemingway himself. Apparently forced to reread *Sanctuary* as a last resort, he insinuates that Faulkner is not a worthy judge of his work because of his drunkenness and questionable artistic standards. There is also a strong feeling of separation here. Hemingway depicts himself as more of an honest, hardworking craftsman than "a cheap kiss ass of the King of Sweden." Of course, the implication is that the former is superior because, from Hemingway's viewpoint, his iron got him closer to "the real thing" of *Death in the Afternoon* than Faulkner's gold got him. Consistent with Hemingway's use of sports metaphors in a writing context, Faulkner's showiness seemingly

45. Hemingway, Letter to Harvey Breit, June 29, 1952. ©2012 Printed with the permission of The Ernest Hemingway Foundation.

better resembled the humorous on- and off-field antics of Bill Veeck or fatigue that affected Robinson's performance in the ring.<sup>46</sup>

June ended, and Breit and Hemingway were still exchanging letters about the Faulkner comment. Apologetic about causing such anxiety, Breit explained his side in early July: "My one purpose was, whenever I told you or told Faulkner about one of you was to sow friendship not discord. I am sorry about it; I am sorry that Bill cooked up this statement. I can make it all right if he reads the book and talks intelligently and warmly about it."<sup>47</sup> As Cowley had had in his correspondence with both authors, Breit wanted to start a social relationship, even "friendship," between the two rivaling modernists. Had Breit's intent not arisen from a controversial statement, perhaps Hemingway would have reached out to Faulkner, if only briefly. Instead, Hemingway did not reach out with friendly gestures but with a one-two punch criticizing his writing and drinking problems, conflating the artist with the (alcoholic) man as always.

Hemingway, though, had more to say about Faulkner and his shortcomings. On July 4, he wrote Breit about their mothers' deaths, baseball, Breit's upcoming trip to Spain—and Faulkner:

I never met him but once to shake hands and never to talk with. What I know about him I hear from Cowley. It was him told me about the hunting in the fall and the great importance they give to it. I'm glad that he has it and that he loves it. Truly I didn't mean to be hard on him. But I suppose I was.  
[ . . . ]

Am sure I was hard on Faulkner personally from ignorance. I do not know him personally and I should not believe second hand reports. His work I know because that is my trade and I'm competent to hold an opinion. Only an opinion. Naturally a writer when he reads another writer sees the

46. Hemingway's comparing Faulkner to Sugar Ray Robinson (1921–1989), who suffered the "old heat prostration" in his fight with Joey Maxim at Yankee Stadium in the summer of 1952, is consistent with his notion of writing as sport. The fight-time temperature was around 100°; Robinson felt the severe effects of the heat and eventually lost in the 14th round. He retired afterwards but returned in 1955 (International Boxing Hall of Fame). Hemingway judges Faulkner's lack of artistic endurance, as this comparison and another of Faulkner to a tiring pitcher show.

"An inveterate hustler and energetic maverick," Veeck (1914–1986) was actually quite successful in his capacity as owner of the Cleveland Indians, Chicago White Sox, and St. Louis Browns. He came up with several schemes for raising fans' excitement, including "fireworks, exploding scoreboards and player names on backs of uniforms" and sending a midget (presumably with an almost nonexistent strike zone) up to bat. He also signed two African American players (Larry Doby in 1947, Satchel Paige in 1948) and, in 1937, planted the signature feature of Chicago's Wrigley Field—the ivy that now covers its brick outfield walls (National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum).

47. Breit, Letter to Ernest Hemingway, July 2, 1952.

signs when he is tiring and when he would take him out if he were a pitcher. You see that when you read don't you? You must.<sup>48</sup>

Hemingway may not have wanted to attack Faulkner, but it is hard to take him at his word. He knew little of Faulkner personally, but he knew much of him artistically and competitively, which partially accounts for his soreness about Faulkner not living up to his abilities. Hemingway misreads his own comments; he may have regretted launching into Faulkner so severely, but he certainly meant to castigate him.

Faulkner had struck such a sore spot that his remarks were still in Hemingway's mind as the summer wore on. In August, Hemingway wrote two more letters to Breit that mentioned Faulkner, claiming that he had "been trying for quite a long time now to behave like a Christian and not get sore. That Faulkner statement about how awful my writing was [ . . . ] must have been well intentioned [but] made me throw at his head where ordinarily I would just have pitched him high and inside. It is bad when you throw at anybody's head and worse when you hit it."<sup>49</sup> Three weeks later: "Sorry I cant write such noble phrases as Faulkner. But I am a writer not a southern orator and I try to put what I believe in a book and let the reader find it or not find it there."<sup>50</sup> While Faulkner did not fully lambaste Hemingway's writing, Hemingway's insecurity interpreted his somewhat-haughty statement as suggesting such. His masculinized competitiveness aimed up and in, so to speak, at Faulkner and his seemingly regrettable aesthetic of overstatement. Hemingway's competitiveness was clearly in overdrive in the summer of 1952—his sports images (boxing, baseball), his attacks against Faulkner's writing and drinking problems, *noble-Nobel* wordplay, and his critique of Faulkner's ignorance of animals. Just as the 1947 ranking had reached Hemingway at a rough time, news of Faulkner's "doctors, lawyers, and wolves" comment reached a frustrated and sensitive man. Faulkner's ranking and his cryptic remarks are interrelated: both reached Hemingway second-hand, roused his anger, prompted him to send a series of letters (to Mary, Buck Lanham, Breit), and were misinterpreted—consciously or unconsciously—and met with hostility by Hemingway.

Hemingway saw artistic value in Faulkner, as his qualified praise of *As I Lay Dying*, *Pylon*, and Faulkner's talents indicate; however, his professional resentment trumped any literary appreciation. Faulkner was, according to

48. Hemingway, Letter to Harvey Breit, July 4, 1952. ©2012 Printed with the permission of The Ernest Hemingway Foundation.

49. Hemingway, Letter to Harvey Breit, August 4, 1952. ©2012 Printed with the permission of The Ernest Hemingway Foundation.

50. Hemingway, Letter to Harvey Breit, August 23, 1952. ©2012 Printed with the permission of The Ernest Hemingway Foundation.

Hemingway, not the dedicated artist that he saw himself to be, or so the above letters imply. His ego was wounded by poor reviews of *Across the River and into the Trees*, a cryptic reaction from his fiercest competitor, and his personal problems. What especially piqued Hemingway was that Faulkner seemed to be judging him from the higher level of the Nobel Prize. Always touchy about criticism, especially when it came from Oxford, Mississippi, he misconstrued Faulkner's praise as condescending, and he countered with his own catalog of shortcomings. Granted, Faulkner's statement is puzzling—even a little dismissive—yet Hemingway overreacted partly because of his anxiety over Faulkner's higher artistic standing. Psychological and emotional demons were hindering Hemingway's writing, but apparently not Faulkner's, as the latter continued to publish books after he won the Nobel despite his own emotional and domestic problems. In the early 1950s, Hemingway's writerly self-image indicates the anxiety implicit in this competition, regardless of his own influence, abilities, and success. The troubles of the writer's mind are often aggravated by the success of his or her contemporaries; another's achievement often effects more demons and competitive jealousy and further depletes one's emotional reserves.

#### NOT NEEDING DEFENDING AND DISCOVERING "GOD, A CREATOR"

"In the fall the war was always there, but we did not go to it anymore"—so Hemingway opens "In Another Country" (1927).<sup>51</sup> In the early 1950s, a different kind of war was still taking place between Faulkner and Hemingway, one that they, unlike the wounded Nick Adams, continued to "go to." Perpetuating their war of words, Faulkner twice spoke publicly—and positively—about Hemingway's work: in *Time* about *Across the River and into the Trees*, and in Washington and Lee University's *Shenandoah* about *The Old Man and the Sea*, ostensibly trying to make amends with Hemingway while asserting his sense of his own superiority.

Published in September 1950, *Across the River and into the Trees* met with strong sales but highly critical reviews. Despite its apparent shortcomings, the novel did have some admirers. Evelyn Waugh had twice publicly defended *Across the River and into the Trees* in *Tablet* (September 30, 1950) and *Time* (October 30, 1950). In the former, Waugh praised Hemingway's work—saying, for instance, that "Mr. Hemingway is one of the most original and powerful of living writers" and that the novel "is written in that

51. Hemingway, "In Another Country," 206.

pungent vernacular that Hemingway should have patented.” Additionally, Waugh’s *Tablet* essay proclaims that the novel’s critics “have been smug, condescending, derisive, some with controlled glee, some with an affectation of pity; all agreed that there is a great failure to celebrate”;<sup>52</sup> Waugh seems to see no such “failure.”

Another of his public supporters was, perhaps to Hemingway’s chagrin, Faulkner. In a November 13 letter to *Time*, he echoed Waugh’s defense of Hemingway and his attack on the novel’s critics, though in a more Faulknerian voice:

I would like to have said this myself, not the Waugh of course but the equivalent Faulkner. One reason I did not is, the man who wrote some of the pieces in *Men Without Women* and *The Sun Also Rises* and some of the African stuff (and some—most—all the rest of it too for that matter) does not need defending, because the ones who throw the spitballs didn’t write the pieces in *Men Without Women* and *The Sun Also Rises*, and the African pieces and the rest of it, and the ones who didn’t write *Men Without Women* and *The Sun Also Rises* and the African pieces and the rest of it don’t have anything to stand on while they throw the spitballs.<sup>53</sup>

These comments presage Faulkner’s June 1952 statement to Breit; he even defended some of the same works: *The Sun Also Rises*, *Men Without Women*, “the African stuff.” He describes Hemingway as a writer whose artistic corpus set him above the critics who panned his recent novel. The author’s vast and admirable work, Faulkner suggests, can defend him from criticism. This is a complimentary, if a little clunky, statement. Faulkner’s newfound status as a Nobel laureate seemingly brought out his professional generosity, his past criticisms notwithstanding at the moment. Although Faulkner defended *Across the River and into the Trees* and its author, he may not have read it. *Faulkner’s Library* does not list the book among his collection at Rowan Oak, and he does not refer to specific aspects of plot, theme, or character.<sup>54</sup> He would later comment on *The Old Man and the Sea* before reading the text, and he could have done so here. The statement above refers more to Hemingway’s reputation than to particulars of the novel; Faulkner did not necessarily have to read it before making these observations. If Faulkner indeed did not read the novel and spoke only to defend Hemingway as a model writer, he missed something: two allusions unmistakably associated with him.

52. Qtd. in Meyers, 382.

53. Faulkner, “To the Editor of *Time*,” 210–11.

54. Blotner, *Faulkner*, 36.

Much of the novel features emotional conversations between its May–December couple: the fifty-one-year-old Colonel Richard Cantwell and the eighteen-year-old Italian Contessa, Renata. The novel follows a few days in their lives in Venice, as Cantwell remembers his wartime service and savors his last few moments with Renata. In part a symbolic retelling of *The Divine Comedy*, the novel is richly allusive: Cantwell and Renata (in many ways his Beatrice) refer to Dante, Shakespeare, Blake, Whitman, Rimbaud, and Verlaine directly. In addition, they refer to a pair of Southerners indirectly. One relatively innocuous allusion is to Margaret Mitchell: Chapter 19 concludes with Cantwell thinking “Today is another day,”<sup>55</sup> a spin on the famous closing line of *Gone with the Wind*, “Tomorrow is another day.” This mention of Mitchell echoes the novel’s other literary allusions: primarily passing references in dialogue, though Mitchell was a popular author, not canonized as Shakespeare, Dante, and others were.

The second allusion to a Southerner was no mere passing reference. Hemingway’s evocations of Faulkner carried more weight than those to other authors, given their longstanding rivalry, dialectic, and intertextuality. Ever conscious of Faulkner’s presence, Hemingway twice refers to him through Cantwell and Renata, not by name but by his disparaging nickname, “Corncob,” one of Hemingway’s favorite epithets for Faulkner. Calling him “Corncob” revealed Hemingway’s awareness of his work, but such a moniker links Faulkner with impotence, even sexual perversity, both traditionally non-masculine elements opposed to Hemingway’s persona. As he would continue doing in the 1950s, Hemingway feminized Faulkner by referring to him with a heavily Oedipal and Freudian nickname.

The first reference to Faulkner is in Chapter 9, when Renata is introduced. As she and Cantwell talk in Harry’s Bar, the Colonel ponders the multilingualism of their discussions:

“It isn’t much of a trade, is it?” He said *oficio* instead of trade, because they spoke Spanish together too, when they left French, and when they did not wish to speak English before other people. Spanish is a rough language, the Colonel thought, rougher than a corncob sometimes. But you can say what you mean in it and make it stick.<sup>56</sup>

In comparing the Spanish language to a corncob, Hemingway could have meant to evoke an image of a corncob stripped of its kernels down to its rough core. Had this been the only use of “corncob” in the novel, we might overlook it, although Popeye—in his depraved way—made a corncob “stick”

55. Hemingway, *Across the River and into the Trees*, 168.

56. *Ibid.*, 89–90.

in *Sanctuary*'s readers' minds. However, "corncob" resurfaces, the second time more pointedly. As Cantwell and Renata are ordering their wine and after-dinner cheese in Chapter 12, Cantwell senses that something is troubling Renata:

The girl had been quiet and a little withdrawn, since she had seen Alvarito. Something was going on in her mind, and it was an excellent mind. But, momentarily, she was not with them.

[ . . . ]

The *Gran Maestro* left and the Colonel said, "What's the matter, Daughter?"

"Nothing. Never anything. Always nothing."

"You might as well pull out of it. We haven't time for such luxuries."

"No. I agree. We will devote ourselves to the cheese."

"Do I have to take it like a corn cob?"

"No," she said, not understanding the colloquialism, but understanding exactly what was meant, since it was she who had been doing the thinking.<sup>57</sup>

In this passage, "take it" suggests something negative or unnatural, in connection with how she will express to Cantwell whatever is troubling her—perhaps Renata's unspoken romantic connection with Alvarito. This more telling use of "corncob" invokes Faulkner's most controversial novel, in which the kidnapped Temple Drake is forced to "take it like a corn cob" while she is Popeye's sexual captive; the cob becomes a phallic substitute that the impotent Popeye uses for his perverse sexual gratification. While Renata misses the specific connotations of the "colloquialism," she grasps the Colonel's meaning, which suggests sodomy or, at least, something sexually perverse, violent, and painful. While the novel's veiled reference to Faulkner is one of a network of allusions to poets, novelists, and painters, the highly connotative "corncob" carries more contextual weight than the Colonel's twist on Scarlett O'Hara's last words or his reference to Blake's "The Tyger" ("What hand or eye framed that dark-ed symmetry?" he asks about a gondola).<sup>58</sup> Faulkner and Hemingway had a great many private "conversations" through their novels, "corncob" among them. Hemingway's using "corncob" to connote aural and physical roughness is subtly executed but nonetheless derisive and resounding.

"Corncob" is a private cipher for Hemingway, similar to "the battery of coded allusions" in the works of Joyce, Eliot, Pound, and Lewis.<sup>59</sup> In *Intertextual*

57. Ibid., 124–25.

58. Ibid., 140.

59. Brown, 7.

*Dynamics within the Literary Group*, Dennis Brown examines *The Waste Land* and *Finnegans Wake* as two of many texts in which Eliot and Joyce engaged with one another, Pound, and Lewis, at private and public levels. For example, Lewis criticized Joyce and *Ulysses* in his *Time and Western Man* (1927); Joyce wove a reply to Lewis into “Work in Progress” (eventually parts of *Finnegans Wake*) by associating a pessimistic character with him.<sup>60</sup> Relatedly, Hemingway’s use of “corncob” is highly “coded,” so much so that Faulkner himself may have missed it if he read the novel. In two conversations—textually between Cantwell and Renata, and symbolically between rival American modernists—“corncob” is a private symbol used at Faulkner’s expense, one only those privy to Hemingway’s moniker would understand (perhaps Cowley, Breit, and Lillian Ross, all of whom were his correspondents in the decade). Faulkner may have recognized the reference to *Sanctuary*, though he—and readers—may not have known that Hemingway had co-opted “corncob” for his own different, insulting, and de-masculinizing uses.

Another reason for Hemingway’s swipe at Faulkner in *Across the River and into the Trees* again evokes April 1947. Hemingway began the novel in the late 1940s, and Faulkner’s ranking of him was, presumably, fresh while he was writing. Hemingway was bitter about what he saw as a potshot at his courage, his friendly letters to Faulkner notwithstanding. Referring twice to a corncob in the novel that directly followed their epistolary tête-à-tête was a way for him to respond secretly and maliciously. His vindictiveness and sensed inferiority often stimulated his anti-Faulkner ethos. The use of “corncob” in *Across the River and into the Trees* is a lashing-out made in response to Faulkner’s ranking and, in a larger sense, to his perception of Faulkner’s greater success. He “may have seen the new work as a way to regain his prominence as America’s best-known writer, especially after William Faulkner ranked him fourth among his contemporaries [ . . . ]. And he had taken an advance for two stories from *Cosmopolitan*. Perhaps this perceived pressure is what led Hemingway to compose and publish the novel as he did.”<sup>61</sup> Such “perceived pressure” surely guided Hemingway’s hastily serializing and publishing the novel, trying to write additional work, and embedding two cryptic barbs at Faulkner. This is consistent with their mutual psychological influence: Hemingway could not let Faulkner’s criticism of his inadequate artistic courage go unanswered. *Across the River and into the Trees* is thus another layer of the Faulkner–Hemingway rivalry—both for Faulkner’s praise of it in *Time* and for Hemingway’s acidic references to Faulkner, which the latter may not have even read. Had he done so,

60. Ibid., 95–96.

61. Trogon, 230.



there may have been another intertext in this dialectic, as Faulkner would likely have responded with his own coded message.



By late 1952, two autumns had passed since the *Time* letter. Faulkner again spoke of Hemingway publicly, though less cryptically this time. After defending *Across the River and into the Trees*, he highly praised *The Old Man and the Sea* in a fall 1952 review in *Shenandoah*, published soon after the private controversy surrounding the “doctors, lawyers, and wolves” comment. Just as he would read virtually everything that Faulkner wrote or said about him, Hemingway saw this review and had his own interpretations—a review of Faulkner’s review, perhaps.

Although he never acceded to Breit’s request to appraise *The Old Man and the Sea* in the *Times Book Review*, Faulkner agreed to write a brief review for Washington and Lee University’s publication. What would be Hemingway’s last published novel was “His best”:

Time may show it to be the single best piece of any of us, I mean his and my contemporaries. This time, he discovered God, a Creator. Until now, his men and women had made themselves, shaped themselves out of their own clay; their victories and defeats were at the hands of each other, just to prove to themselves or one another how tough they could be. But this time, he wrote about pity: about something somewhere that made them all: the old man who had to catch the fish and then lose it, the fish that had to be caught and then lost, the sharks which had to rob the old man of his fish; made them all and loved them all and pitied them all. It’s all right. Praise God that whatever made and loves and pities Hemingway and me kept him from touching it any further.<sup>62</sup>

Continuing his praise of the story of Santiago and the marlin, Faulkner drafted a congratulatory telegram to Hemingway in May 1953, after *The Old Man and the Sea* was awarded the Pulitzer Prize. Since this particular writing was discovered on the back of a manuscript page of *The Town* and is not in the Hemingway Collection at the Kennedy Library, Faulkner may not have sent it. The sentiment, though, is noteworthy: “Splendid news. [ . . . ] not that [ . . . ] the old man [ . . . ] needs more accolade than it already has from us who know the anguish it took and have tried to do it too.”<sup>63</sup> Ironi-

62. Faulkner, “Review of *The Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway,” 193.

63. Faulkner, *Selected Letters of William Faulkner*, 348.

cally, Faulkner is very clear regarding his opinion of the novel and its creator, while he was elliptical in his statement to Breit when he was initially asked to review it. This second time, Faulkner had read the novel before writing his *Shenandoah* review, whereas he seemingly had not done so before commenting and unwittingly setting off a flurry of letters from Hemingway. It is also ironic that a man whose signature, avant-garde style was expansive admired such a minimalist novel.

Faulkner saw *The Old Man and the Sea* as evidence of Hemingway's progression in writing and characterization. Whereas previous characters had "shaped themselves" and were anxious to "prove" their toughness—an implicit shot at Hemingway's earlier work—Santiago originated from a higher power. Whether the book is "the single best piece of any of us" can be debated, but what is less debatable is that Faulkner admired this slim novel, particularly its use of pity. Because "pity" was one of "the old verities and truths" that Faulkner had stressed two years earlier in his Nobel Prize address, he suggests a linkage between himself and Hemingway. Associating such a touchstone theme with Hemingway's novel was a way for him to assert its value. Faulkner may have passed judgment on Hemingway's aesthetic agenda in his address, even embedding a criticism of Hemingway's earlier "tough" characters in his review, but his ultimate assessment of *The Old Man and the Sea* is laudatory. A reason that Faulkner enjoyed the novel, his review posits, is that Hemingway wove such important themes into what is, on the surface, simply a story of a Cuban man on a Gulf Stream fishing trip. Authors and character seem to have shared similar "anguish" in their efforts, Faulkner implies.

Just as he had anxiously read Faulkner's previous public statements, Hemingway read the review. He seems either to have ignored or overlooked the praise, instead reacting negatively in a February 1953 letter to the *New Yorker's* Lillian Ross. On February 28, Ross published an article based on visits that she paid to Random House in 1952 and 1953 to see Faulkner, who was typing parts of *A Fable* in Saxe Commins's office. As he was wont to do in his correspondence, Hemingway sounded off to her about Faulkner. Ross must have sent Hemingway a letter about the visits and/or an advance copy of the interview, since his letter predates the February 28, 1953 publication of the *New Yorker* article.

Ross's interview is "fluffy" and "close to parody, with an effort to reproduce Faulkner's deep Mississippi accent."<sup>64</sup> The article is not a serious analysis of the man or his work; rather, it describes a mildly comic episode in which a quirky Faulkner is working on the book that would gain him the

64. Karl, 850.

National Book Award, Pulitzer Prize, and more of Hemingway's invective. Ross describes how she watched "the sole owner and proprietor of Yoknapatawpha County bring forth prose. He typed very, *very* slowly, mostly with the middle finger of his right hand, but with an occasional assist from the index finger of his left." Ross also tried to replicate Faulkner's speech:

Faulkner coughed, and Commins glanced anxiously at him. "Got a cold, Bill?" he asked. Faulkner shook his head, his middle finger poised above the space bar. "Think you ought to take some medicine?" Commins asked. Down went the space bar. "Isn't anythin' Ah got whiskey won't cure," Faulkner said. [ . . . ] "Work hurts mah back," he said. "Ah think Ah'm goin' to invent somethin' like an ironin' board, so Ah can lie flat on mah back while Ah type." He pressed both hands against his spine. "Fell off a hoss last spring," he told us. "Back's been hurtin' ever since."<sup>65</sup>

The "interview" continues for another page or so, and Ross concludes with Faulkner worrying about an impending sense of "doom": "'Ah have a feelin' of doom hangin' over me today' [ . . . ] 'Damn it!' he said softly. 'Ah wish mah doom would lift or come on. Ah got work to do.'" The article's closing image is of Faulkner walking along Madison Avenue, "a small man in a green hat, waiting for his doom to lift."<sup>66</sup> Ross's article paints Faulkner as a rather simple, physically vulnerable writer with a taste for alcohol, an awareness of impending "doom," and a thick Southern drawl—all of which were grist for Hemingway's competitive mill.

Ross had also published a profile of Hemingway in the *New Yorker* in May 1950. Her exaggeration of Hemingway's agrammatical, pidgin English—for example, "'He read book all way up on plane'" and "'They can't yank novelist like they can pitcher'"—was thought to reveal Hemingway's showmanship.<sup>67</sup> As she had done with Faulkner's speech, Ross captured Hemingway's vocal intonations. Yet, Hemingway was consciously affected and chose to speak in ways that were abnormal for him, while Faulkner was speaking in his native Southern vernacular. Faulkner's idiom was distinct from Hemingway's sarcastic performance in its unaffected naturalness, hence Karl's view of the profile as parodic.

Ross likely forwarded her Faulkner article to Hemingway, which further fueled his disdain. He again put his anxiety and negative feelings into biting language on February 20, 1953:

65. Qtd. in Meriwether and Millgate, 75.

66. *Ibid.*, 76.

67. Ross, 18.

I cannot help out very much with the true dope on God as I have never played footy-footy with him; nor been a cane brake God hopper; nor won the Nobel prize. It would be best to get the true word on God from Mr. Faulkner.

[ . . . . ]

I hope Mr. Faulkner never forgets himself and gives it to the deity with his corn cob. [ . . . ]

You ask if I know what he means. What he means is that he is spooked to die and he is moving in on the side of the strongest battalions. We will fight it out here and if there are no reserves it is too Faulking bad [ . . . ].

[ . . . . ]

Lillian I cannot help but think that people who talk about God as though they knew him intimately and had received The Word etc. are frauds. Faulkner has always been fairly fraudulent but it is only recently that he has introduced God when he is conning people.<sup>68</sup>

This letter's palpable negativity reveals that Hemingway was, presumably, incapable of accepting positive feedback from Faulkner. He bristly expresses many of his old grievances: Faulkner's provincial lifestyle; the Nobel Prize; his apparent God-hopping; a symbolic corncob with which he sodomizes God (quite a profane image); his untrustworthy speech; his fearing death and lacking courage; his literary trickery. His snide wordplay—with "Faulking" replacing "fucking"—both associates Faulkner with Hemingway's anger and desperation at being on the weaker side and echoes the "hemingwaves" pun in *The Wild Palms*. Although Ross never explicitly mentions Faulkner's religious beliefs, Hemingway faults the religiosity that Faulkner expressed in his review of *The Old Man and the Sea* about him discovering "God, a creator." Because Faulkner had not been as outwardly religious, Hemingway accuses him of jumping to religion late in his life when tricking readers and when facing his apparent fear of death.

Unconditionally accepting laudation from Faulkner must have suggested to Hemingway that his competitor's appeal and self-esteem outweighed his own. He did not want to be America's second-best writer, and misreading Faulkner's positive review enabled Hemingway disparage his literary foe. If he miscast Faulkner's compliments as examples of fraudulence or newfound religiosity, then he could deny Faulkner's higher standing. After all, if Faulkner was newly and falsely religious, then his words about Hemingway must have been insincere. He held Faulkner in such contempt that he could not accept that Faulkner had taken the high ground in praising his novel

68. Hemingway, *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters*, 807.

more unreservedly than in any past remarks. Hemingway also resented Faulkner's linking their artistic mindsets through pity. He knew that pity was part of Faulkner's Nobel Prize address, and—as his speech shows—he distanced himself from Faulkner's artistic ideas. Although Faulkner tried to extol the text, Hemingway would always read and disparage his work with decided alacrity. When he read Faulkner's *A Fable*, he was reminded of his disdain for *Requiem for a Nun* and Faulkner's religion. He responded suitably. And eagerly.

### REWRITING THE BIBLE AND THEN WRITING THEM ALL

"One shouldn't win the Nobel Prize, then rewrite the *Bible* and become a bore—I accepted the *Bible* in its original version"—so Hemingway told readers of *McCall's* in 1956.<sup>69</sup> *A Fable* was Faulkner's most decorated book, winning the Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award. However, his novel about a Christ-figure in the First World War did not sit well with Hemingway, who often panned it. In one instance, he told Breit that it was "false and contrived," "a faked and boozy book"; moreover, "boozy writing and forced draft writing in your publishers office makes very bad reading."<sup>70</sup> He had clearly read Ross's piece in *The New Yorker*, because Hemingway pokes fun at Faulkner for writing parts of *A Fable* at Random House. A short time later, he proclaimed to Buck Lanham on November 10, 1954, "Anyway I did not write *A Fable* by William Faulkner. I can swear to that with a clean heart,"<sup>71</sup> dissociating himself from what he saw as a poor, overly religious novel. Two years later, he wrote to a Mr. Rider on July 29, 1956, "deliver[ing] a scathing appraisal, couched in scatological terms, of his greatest contemporary":

The most readable of Faulkner is *Sanctuary* and *Pylon*. I think he is a no good son of a bitch myself. But some of the Southern stuff is good and some of the negro stuff is very good. Also a short story called *The Bear* is worth reading. His last book *A Fable* isnt pure shit. It is impure diluted shit and there isnt a shit tester at Ichang where they ship the night soil from Chungking to but would fault it.<sup>72</sup>

69. Qtd. in Brucoli, *Conversations with Ernest Hemingway*, 108.

70. Hemingway, Letter to Harvey Breit, September 24, 1954. ©2012 Printed with the permission of The Ernest Hemingway Foundation.

71. Hemingway, *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters*, 840.

72. Qtd. in Brucoli and Clark, 83.

Despite praising *Sanctuary*, *Pylon*, and *The Bear* reservedly, Hemingway's criticisms, particularly the equation of *A Fable* with excrement, counter such approval. Hemingway indirectly fires back at Faulkner's past comments: his defense of *Across the River and into the Trees* in *Time* and June 1952 letter to Breit. Both letters mentioned "some of the African stuff" and "the best of the African stuff," respectively. Hemingway's twice using "stuff" to praise a few unnamed works riffs on Faulkner's doing virtually the same, even syntactically ("some of the \_\_\_\_ stuff"). Here, he ripostes with his own assessment of Faulkner's "stuff" and tainted, unreadable *A Fable*, with Mr. Rider becoming yet another audience to Hemingway's derision of his preeminent rival.

In addition to these letters to Breit, Lanham, and Rider, Hemingway mocked *A Fable* in other letters to Breit, who was again thrust between the authors after his "A Walk with Faulkner" was printed in the January 30, 1955, *Times Book Review*. Faulkner and Breit discussed, among other things, the Ole Miss ranking and *A Fable*. Ever conscious of Faulkner's statements, Hemingway read the piece and wrote to Breit in late February 1955. This emotional, handwritten letter sees Faulkner as an:

[February 27] [E]xhibitionistic, [moonshine?] frustrated phony cunt. But he could write when he was sober and I am sure he will have the Southern good sense to never sober up enough to kill himself. [ . . . ] The worse I write and the worse I sell-out the greater I succeed. Wish him luck for me [ . . . ] and tell him he's as phony as his grandfather and the bullshit bear hunt. [A] man who could build up that shit about a nice animal [ . . . ] could do anything Faulkner could do. [A]nd he could write so well when he was only 1/2 drunk. Having taken money to re-write my stuff [ . . . ] he feels a little bad. But he'll always be up there for the awards and his corn-cobbing and walking backwards before the King [of Sweden] [ . . . ] Hail Faulkner full of shit corn art with thee. Blessed art thou among phonies and blessed is the fruit of thy womb *Fable*. Holy Faulkner mother of shit never come near us now nor in the hour of our (actual) death amen.

Perhaps that will cast a spell over him.

[ . . . ]

[February 28] Started a long letter [ . . . ] but got diverted and too lyric on W (corn-cob) Faulkner so couldn't and it was quite funny too but one writer should not write about another writer who re-writes his (my) stuff for money for Hollywood and then gives out Rankings when he goes [walks?] about.<sup>73</sup>

73. Hemingway, Letter to Harvey Breit, February 27–28, 1955. ©2012 Printed with the permission of The Ernest Hemingway Foundation.

"When you know such good people it makes corn-cob seem like an awful jerk but I must not comment or I cant send this letter," he writes toward the end. Hemingway airs his typical gripes about Faulkner—phoniness, drunken writing, ranking, untrustworthy Southern drawl, screenwriting for money (just as he rebuked Fitzgerald for doing in the 1930s), and religious beliefs. What differentiated Faulkner's Hollywood work from Fitzgerald's was, of course, that one of Faulkner's projects entailed adapting *To Have and Have Not* for pay, not for any appreciable artistic benefit. Hemingway probably knew that Faulkner was not as well off financially as he was. That he worked in Hollywood illustrated, in a slanted way, some social inferiority to Hemingway, who saw himself as a better patriarch because he did not need to work in the movies, only selling the rights to his work.

More tellingly, Hemingway twice feminizes Faulkner by apparently calling him a "cunt" and seeing *A Fable* as his symbolic child. This feminizing strategy is akin to Hemingway's comments in *The Sun Also Rises* and his September 1949 letter to Charles Scribner (see my introduction) where he felt more masculine than Henry James. Hemingway insults Faulkner by directing at him a sexual slur used against women, also imagining him with a uterus. For Hemingway, if he could not beat Faulkner, at least he could symbolically emasculate him, as he did with "corncob." This gendered strategy was typical: "He feminized the things that hurt his career," among them critics, writers, and anything or -one else he thought was detrimental to his work.<sup>74</sup> Seeing Faulkner as less masculine than himself—as either the female "cunt" or as the impotent "corncob"—embodies Hemingway's literary machismo that, in Judith Butler's and Thomas Strychacz's senses, he performed with great regularity to assert his masculine identity. Sanderson also observes that Hemingway "had been savaged by critical sharks" after *Across the River and into the Trees*, just as Santiago's marlin was—Hemingway consciously wove this parallel into the novella.<sup>75</sup> She locates Hemingway's act of feminization in the woman tourist at the end of *The Old Man and the Sea* who mistakes the marlin's skeleton for a shark's and who thus misses out on the poignant story of Santiago's struggle and loss.

Further denigrating Faulkner, Hemingway jokingly casts him as a minstrel who humiliated himself by performing for the King of Sweden. Hemingway even wanted his blasphemous parody of the Hail Mary to become a kind of curse. His mock-prayer riffing on *A Fable* echoes his comments to Ross about Faulkner's closeness with and sodomizing of the deity. Read in concert, both sets of comments are sacrilegious, yet they compress Hemingway's

74. Sanderson, 191.

75. *Ibid.*, 190.

impugning of Faulkner: that he is “full of shit,” a “corn” whiskey drunk, and “Blessed [ . . . ] among phonies.” Despite his claim to “follow strictly the rule never to speak ill of a great-hearted brother craftsman,” Hemingway separates himself from Faulkner. One wonders what Breit was thinking as he read this letter; in part, he must have been grateful to be in Hemingway’s good graces.

Hemingway had written Breit earlier in February: “I read about the walk with Mr. Faulkner. Glad he is walking around and talking so interestingly. [ . . . ] I got sore there at the old corn-drinking mellifluous who always shows up when they hand out even book-sellers medals. Did he ever miss a coming out party?”<sup>76</sup> Such an apparent social debut feminizes Faulkner into a Southern debutante, not a Nobel laureate of great literary significance. Hemingway wrote again in July 1956: “Faulkner gives me the creeps. Harvey remember that Papa’s last words were Never trust a man with a Southern Accent. They could talk reasonable English as we talk it if they were not phony”; “Faulkner [wrote about flying] very well in *Pylon* but you cannot do something some one else has done though you might have done it if they hadn’t.”<sup>77</sup> As always, Hemingway gave with one hand and took with the other: to his mind, the artistic merit of *Pylon* was offset by Faulkner’s disingenuous Southern vernacular. Hemingway apparently wanted to incorporate his flying experiences during World War II into his fiction, but Faulkner’s descriptions of flying in *Pylon* (and *Sartoris*) prevented him from doing so, perhaps unlike Faulkner’s choice of adapting *To Have and Have Not*.

Although Hemingway does not mention this usage, one specific aspect of *A Fable* that may have bothered him was Faulkner’s use of two bullfighting similes. In the “Tuesday/Wednesday/Wednesday Night” chapter, Faulkner likens a killing to bullfighting, describing: “one single neat surgeon-like back-handed slash of the razor, running into then out of the instant’s immobility into which all motion flowed into one gesture of formulated epicene, almost finicking, even niggardly fatal violence like the bullfighter’s”; and, in the next paragraph, “with one word leaving them once more fixed, as with one twitch of his cape the espada does the bull.”<sup>78</sup> Because Hemingway had so closely and publicly aligned his aesthetic goals with bullfighting, this ref-

76. Hemingway, Letter to Harvey Breit, February 1, 1955. ©2012 Printed with the permission of The Ernest Hemingway Foundation. Other archival letters contain similar criticisms of Faulkner, all of which are in the Hemingway Collection’s Outgoing Correspondence files; see, among others, December 5, 1952, Letter to Wallace Meyer; February 23, 1953, Letter to Charles Poore; June 18, 1956, Letter to Harvey Breit; July 29, 1954, Letter to Harvey Breit; and August 9, 1954, Letter to Harvey Breit. The July 1954 letter to Breit refers to “Dr. Faulkner,” a mock-homage to Faulkner’s persona as literary sage and Nobel laureate.

77. Hemingway, *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters*, 862–63.

78. Faulkner, *A Fable*, 835.



erence has significance beyond the narrative proper. As Hemingway had done in Chapter 12 of *In Our Time*, *The Sun Also Rises*, and *Death in the Afternoon*, Faulkner uses bullfighting to connote the near-cessation of movement, the “one gesture” that is “fixed.” This allusion to a *torero* is different from that in the earlier “Old Man,” because the former is an imagistic tool strongly associated with Hemingway, rather than a counterstrike to *Death in the Afternoon*. As in *The Wild Palms*, Faulkner recast Hemingway’s imagery to describe a killing of a person. Although there is only slight influence in this common image, Faulkner was seemingly intrigued by the image of the *torero* ceasing movement that Hemingway had used so often in his fiction and nonfiction, most of which Faulkner had read and claimed to admire. Maybe it bothered Hemingway that Faulkner had used one of his own fictive constructs—that of the bullfighter arresting motion—in the presumably weak, overly religious novel, or that the novel may have been Faulkner’s masterstroke in their contest for literary and critical acclaim.

In another 1955 letter to Breit, Hemingway mentions that he was approached by Donald Friede about writing an introduction to a projected collection of Breit’s interviews, *The Writer Observed*.<sup>79</sup> Noting that he would happily introduce such an anthology, Hemingway brought up Faulkner, whom he would pay to write a competing introduction: “Friede could explain to Mr. Faulkner that I feel unworthy and wish to cede my opportunity to an older and higher-ranking writer and would pay him three hundred and fifty dollars and that it would not necessarily have to make sense. He could just write however he feels at the moment or as the spirits move him.”<sup>80</sup> Painting Faulkner as financially inferior and himself as mock-deferential, Hemingway again reveals how deeply the remarks about his lack of artistic courage and fourth-place “ranking” in April 1947—also for pay, though \$100 less than Hemingway offers here—continued to sting. He also took symbolic revenge against Faulkner by suggesting that his introduction would be incoherent and the byproduct of quasi-divine inspiration, as he felt *A Fable* and *The Old Man and the Sea*’s review were. Having cut down Faulkner with his own financial stability, Hemingway imagined how his own piece would read, trading stylistic places and making little sense in the way he felt Faulkner did:

All of us here tonight know there is one critic worthy of your and mine attention. He is our fellow townsman Harvey G. Breit. (Applause) Those of us assembled her[e] will little know nor long remember. (Applause) the

79. Donaldson, *By Force of Will*, 253.

80. Hemingway, Letter to Harvey Breit, 1955. ©2012 Printed with the permission of The Ernest Hemingway Foundation.

untrammelled dead who slug nutty in their obese complacency did here what we only said we did here. (A hush) When I first met Breit clear and did he stop and speak to me his hand was clenched on the handle of the plow that was to carry him to the stars. God I said and the God I refer to is The Creator, our father, my friend and dare I say my daily confident (A long hush and a moment of silent prayer) God, I said, you didn't come here just to sit on your ass, the same ass that bore Our Lord through the ill starred streets of Zion? We, you and I God, could be praising Breit the young, square shouldered, two fisted inspiration of all American Youth, the foe of delinquency and deliquescence, the rummy's beau sabreur and foe of every un-american beast that haunts our purlieus? You didn't come here on a hot day like today did you God to not praise Harvey did you God? Christ no, said God. Don't get me wrong Hemingstein. Good, I said. Gentlemen God is with us in this all the way.<sup>81</sup>

Ostensibly, this imagined piece—part preface, part speech—is about Breit, but it uncovers more about Hemingway's opinions of Faulkner. This speech is not written in Hemingway's style; instead, it is his take on what he often described as Faulkner's disjointed style. As Hemingway wrote to Bernard Berenson on October 14, 1955, he liked to try his hand at imitating Faulkner's style à la a pianist's exercises, which is exactly what he does here.<sup>82</sup> The prose above is strongly reminiscent of Faulkner, as is the stream of consciousness and strung-together "slug nutty in their obese complacency," "the young, square shouldered, two fisted inspiration," and "delinquency and deliquescence." This passage's style is not Hemingway as such but Hemingway mocking Faulkner in one of the musician's warm-ups he mentioned to Berenson.

Hemingway was wary of Faulkner's rural religiosity, as his own talk with the God-figure reveals. In his mock-parable, Breit clenches a plow (perhaps one like Faulkner and his brother Johncy used at Greenfield Farm), *God* occurs eight times (atypical of Hemingway in his letters), and Hemingway imagines his own interaction with the divine (as he envisioned Faulkner playing "footy-footy" in the letter to Ross). As in his mock Hail Mary about *A Fable* above, Hemingway's humor is sacrilegious, as one would be hard-pressed to imagine a higher power blaspheming, calling him Hemingstein, or bearing Jesus on its "ass" (whether donkey or posterior). His parodying was at its harshest here, as he offers a three-pronged criticism: Faulkner's prose style; his "rummy"-ness and alcoholism; and, according to Hemingway, his newfound religious fervor. As usual, Hemingway's gloves were off when-

81. Ibid.

82. Hemingway, *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters*, 848.

ever Faulkner was involved, especially when he wanted to take down a supposedly better author, which he tries to do in a mock-Faulknerian passage revealing competitiveness and, more so, profound insecurity.



Hemingway followed up the above letters and statements with what would be his last direct statement about Faulkner, “The Art of the Short Story.” In March 1959, Scribners wanted to arrange a student edition of his short stories; Hemingway liked the idea of the project and crafted his preface, according to Jackson Benson, as an expert’s “lecture.”<sup>83</sup> Hemingway completed a draft in the spring while in Spain, but neither Scribners nor Mary liked its lofty, sarcastic tone, and the project never saw publication in Hemingway’s lifetime. Looking back on his writing life—as he was doing in the somewhat biased *A Moveable Feast*—Hemingway envisioned the piece as a forum to share his knowledge with a younger generation of students and would-be writers. Elevating himself to the role of teacher—suggestive of what he may have known of Faulkner as Writer-in-Residence at Virginia—he asks, “Should we begin in the form of a lecture designed to counteract the many lectures you will have heard on the art of the short story?”<sup>84</sup> As the embittered literary sage, he presents his “lecture” sarcastically, talking about his own writing and characters, as well as other literary figures: “The Sea Change” (where “everything is left out”), Margot Macomber (“a bitch for the full course”), Fitzgerald (his “loyal and devoted friend”), and Anderson (“I’m sorry I threw at [him]”).<sup>85</sup>

As Hemingway routinely did when he talked about writing, he discussed Faulkner with biting cruelty that is more self-revelatory than accurate—for over two paragraphs:

When they didn’t know him in Europe, I told them all how he was the best we had [ . . . ] and I over-humbled with him plenty and built him up about as high as he could go because he never had a break then and he was good then. So now whenever he has a few shots, he’ll tell students what’s wrong with me or tell Japanese or anybody they send him to, to build up our local product. I get tired of this but I figure what the hell he’s had a few shots and maybe he even believes it. So you asked me just now what I think about him, as everybody does and I always stall, so I say you know how good he is. Right. You ought to. What is wrong is he cons himself sometimes pretty bad. That may just be the sauce. But for quite a while when he hits the sauce toward

83. Hemingway, “The Art of the Short Story,” 1.

84. *Ibid.*, 2.

85. *Ibid.*, 3, 6, 4, 12.

the end of a book, it shows bad. He gets tired and goes on and on, and that sauce writing is really hard on who has to read it. I mean if they care about writing. I thought maybe it would help if I read it using the sauce myself, but it wasn't any help. [ . . . ] So that's what I think about Faulkner. You ask that I sum it up from the standpoint of a professional. Very good writer. Cons himself now. Too much sauce. But he wrote a really fine story called "The Bear" and I would be glad to put it in this book for your pleasure and delight, if I had written it. But you can't write them all, Jack.

It would be simpler and more fun to talk about other writers and what is good and what is wrong with them, as I saw when you asked me about Faulkner. He's easy to handle because he talks so much for a supposed silent man. Never talk, Jack, if you are a writer, unless you have the guy write it down and have you go over it. Otherwise, they get it wrong. That's what you think until they play a tape back at you. Then you know how silly it sounds. You're a writer aren't you? Okay, then shut up and write.<sup>86</sup>

Hemingway's last written commentary about Faulkner dovetails with his first in *Death in the Afternoon*. In both forums, he adopts a stance of expertise when addressing an imagined reader (either the Old Lady or student) to act as a literary critic in disparaging his competitors. Although he admits that he once enjoyed Faulkner's work and supported him in Europe, as Cowley had told Faulkner, Hemingway thoroughly disparages him here. He proposes that Faulkner's success was diminished by his alcoholism and apparent cheap shots at Hemingway when talking to students and others, as at Ole Miss, Virginia, or in Nagano. As with Faulkner's comments in the 1950s about his insufficient artistic courage, what makes Hemingway look genuine in "The Art of the Short Story" makes Faulkner look disingenuous, almost by definition. The implication of "But you can't write them all" is that Faulkner futilely attempted to do so, while Hemingway praised himself for knowing and following his own limits. Late in his life, he was thinking of Faulkner enviously as an innovator who continued to innovate; he compensated for this professional envy by using Faulkner as his example of the pitfalls into which an otherwise "[v]ery good writer" could fall.

As the quasi-sagacious figure, Hemingway implies that writing while sober and not talking publicly are crucial, hence his images of Faulkner doing the opposite. Hemingway misrepresents the import of Faulkner's work as he suggests that *The Bear* is his only worthy text, especially when he himself had praised, albeit reservedly, *As I Lay Dying*, *Pylon*, and some short stories. Hemingway makes a final break, describing a washed-up Faulkner

86. *Ibid.*, 9.

whose alcoholism hindered his creativity and readers' comprehension of his work. Hemingway may have been projecting his own life, however, as his health problems, marital discord, and drinking hindered his writing, particularly during the troubling summer of 1959 when he was in Spain and finished this piece. He would weave a similar set of criticisms and anxieties into *The Dangerous Summer*, which he was writing concomitantly and which I discuss in the next chapter.

"The Art of the Short Story" distills many criticisms of Faulkner from other letters discussed in this chapter: his self-conning, "sauce writing," loss of talent ("he was good" at one time), alcohol-inspired extemporaneities, and practice of speaking publicly more than writing. Had Faulkner read the preface, Hemingway's comments could have cut close to the bone, but may have felt even more superior and self-confident. The Hemingway persona of "The Art of the Short Story" seems to be fed up with Faulkner—or with feeling second to him—hence his personal register of Faulkner's faults. As always, he tried to overcome his own despondency through derision, bringing others down to the level that he himself had been brought by his own depression, illnesses, and creative struggles. Though he would never admit as much, Hemingway's diatribes against Faulkner must have revealed to him his own troubles, shortcomings, unstable place in American letters, and manifold anxieties.

"PERHAPS HE [ . . . ] READ HEMINGWAY'S BOOK":  
*REQUIEM FOR A NUN AND THE MANSION*

In the same year Hemingway wrote his biting, never-published reflections on his "art," Faulkner completed the Snopes saga with *The Mansion*, published in November 1959. The novel may be, as Jay Parini posits, one that gestures "toward reconciliation and resignation, if not restitution" in the context of Faulkner's life and work.<sup>87</sup> *The Mansion* is very much a novel of memory and recollection, seen particularly in the narrative perspectives of Gavin Stevens, Ratliff, and Chick Mallison in the "Linda" section, and in Mink Snopes's past-present shuttling as he seeks revenge against Flem. In the context of the Faulkner-Hemingway rivalry, the novel also resembles a kind of reminiscence. It evokes Faulkner's early post-World War I fictions (*Soldiers' Pay*, his own soldierly affect), Faulkner's public letter voicing his opposition to fascism and Franco (*Writers Take Sides*, 1938), and Hemingway (Paris, Spain, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*). Unlike *The Wild Palms* two decades previous, *The*

87. Parini, 409.

*Mansion* is more evocative than critical of Hemingway and his public image. With his career and life quieting down, Faulkner chose a more suggestive means of intertextual dialogue, similar to his use of Mister Ernest in the *Big Woods* story, “Race at Morning,” as will be shown in the next chapter. As the conclusion of the Snopes trilogy, *The Mansion* calls Hemingway to mind in various ways: Linda Snopes’s role as an ambulance driver in the Spanish Civil War, Hemingway’s associations with Paris, his time in Spain with other Left-leaning authors, and his portrayal of Maria in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. As Chick travels abroad after graduating from Harvard, he focuses on France as a locus of war and postwar culture: “Then me too in Paris for the last two weeks, to see if the Paris of Hemingway and the Paris of Scott Fitzgerald (they were not the same ones; they merely used the same room) had vanished completely or not too,” one of several Hemingway markers in the text.<sup>88</sup> Chick’s brief, though direct, reference to Hemingway evokes the time he, Fitzgerald, and Faulkner spent in Paris in the 1920s, although the city was much more significant for the former two. Faulkner of course knew of Fitzgerald and his work, but in this context his direct reference to Hemingway is much more connotative. It seems to be the last such reference Faulkner made in his fiction.

More significantly, the first page of the “Linda” section recalls another former ambulance driver who seen a war firsthand. For Chick:

“because no matter how new you might have been anywhere once, you wouldn’t be very new anywhere anymore after you went to Spain with a Greenwich Village poet to fight Hitler. That is, not after the kind of Greenwich Village poet that would get you both blown up by a shell anyhow. That is, provided you were a girl. [ . . . ] But this is the first female girl soldier we ever had, not to mention one actually wounded by the enemy. Naturally we dont include rape for the main reason we aint talking about rape.”

Although Chick has some of his facts wrong—Linda’s husband Barton Kohl was a sculptor, and he died in an airplane crash—his framing of Linda as “a wounded female war veteran” returning to Jefferson establishes her with a certain valuable, formative experience.<sup>89</sup> When Chick and Gavin introduce her to the reader, Linda is doubly suggestive of Hemingway. Her role as an ambulance driver wounded by an explosion recalls Hemingway’s experiences in the First World War, and the Spanish Civil War context calls to mind his more mature experience as a war correspondent. Chick’s passing

88. Faulkner, *The Mansion*, 518.

89. *Ibid.*, 429.

reference to rape as something he is not discussing in the context of the Spanish Civil War can be read as an association with *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, although Linda was not a victim of Fascist sexual brutality as Maria was. *For Whom the Bell Tolls* had been a bestseller and Book of the Month club selection, followed by the popular film starring Gary Cooper in 1943. Readers of *The Mansion* would have known the novel, and likely remembered Maria's traumatic experiences in it. Barton Kohl resembles Robert Jordan as an American who fought and died in Spain,<sup>90</sup> and his name might even call to mind, syllabically and in cadence, that of another Jewish character associated with New York and Spain, Robert Cohn of *The Sun Also Rises*.

In Chapter 8, Chick's memory Jefferson of being "a little blasé about war heroes" in 1919 both sets the tone for Linda's somewhat quiet return to Jefferson in 1937 and echoes Faulkner's and Hemingway's works about young men returning home, *Soldiers' Pay* and "Soldier's Home," respectively: "Not that I mean that even the unscratched ones actually called themselves heroes or thought they were or in fact thought one way or the other about it until they got home and found the ["hero"] epithet being dinned at them from all directions until finally some of them, a few of them, began to believe that perhaps they were."<sup>91</sup> Faulkner probably knew about the physical injuries Hemingway sustained in Italy in 1918, but he likely did not know that Hemingway had affected experiences as a wounded veteran, elite soldier, and officer when returning home. This element of Linda's experience additionally suggests that of Donald Mahon in *Soldiers' Pay*, and that Faulkner fictionalized about himself in 1918–1919—all are native Mississippians with a (fictional) link to war.

In the case of *The Mansion*, Chick later wonders why "the whole town" does not greet Linda upon her return: "which would have happened if she had been elected Miss America instead of merely blown up by a Franco shell or landmine or whatever it was that went off in or under the ambulance she was driving and left her stone deaf."<sup>92</sup> Linda, though not as shell-shocked and aphasiac as Donald Mahon, was significantly injured, often requiring her to communicate with pad and pencil. In this sense, Faulkner associates Linda's memories and experiences with a kind of writing, although she is not a war writer as such. When recounting her experiences, Linda does not posture or self-aggrandize. In Chapter 9, Chick remembers this positive character trait at a family gathering, the returnee having sparked a conversation with Gavin, Chick, and his mother about literature and formative experience:

90. Broncano, 112.

91. *Ibid.*, 492.

92. *Ibid.*, 503.

This time (there were other suppers during the next summer but this was the first one when I was at table too) she began to talk about Spain. Not about the war. I mean, the lost war. It was queer. She mentioned it now and then, not as if it had never happened but as if their side hadn't been licked. [ . . . ] She was talking about the people in it, the people like Kohl. She told about Ernest Hemingway and Malraux [ . . . ].

“What line or paragraph or even page can you compose and write to match giving your life to say No to people like Hitler and Mussolini?” Linda asks thereafter in relation to her husband's and others' deaths for a cause.<sup>93</sup> Linda's—and, by extension, Chick's—referencing writing vis-à-vis Spain and authors on the front points toward Faulkner's shared view of writing and war.

In this passage and throughout the novel, Linda does not romanticize or glorify the war, similar to the aesthetic approach Hemingway wanted to take in *A Farewell to Arms*, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, his introduction to *Men at War*, and other works. Linda seems to have read Hemingway and known of his presence as a (celebrity) war correspondent, perhaps even encountering him in Spain. Her question points toward how writing about war cannot adequately capture the experience of it, its sense of cause and sacrifice. This positive notion of realistic, nonglorified war writing echoes Hemingway's quest for a “true picture” in the selections he chose for *Men at War* (one of which was Faulkner's “Turn About”): “It is not a propaganda book. It seeks to instruct and inform rather than to influence anyone's opinion. Its only and absolute standard for inclusion has been the soundness and truth of the material.”<sup>94</sup> Linda's choice to discuss the war in Spain truthfully and almost self-deferentially would seem to square with Hemingway's notions of “truth” and “soundness.” With Chick, Gavin, and Mrs. Mallison as her audience, Linda highlights the importance of dying for a cause and resisting fascistic dictatorships. Hemingway's somewhat self-important war journalism notwithstanding, Faulkner's character and literary rival seem to share a regard for honesty and honor in the context of war. The above passage is, at some level, praise of Hemingway and other writers whose firsthand experience with war galvanized their writing. *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Broncano aptly posits, “provides us with the information about the reality of war that is missing in *The Mansion*,” in the sense that the latter alludes to and remembers what the former depicts as its time present.<sup>95</sup> Faulkner knew of Hemingway's proximity to combat during the Spanish Civil War and—thanks in part to letters

93. Ibid., 526–27.

94. Hemingway, *Men at War*, xxvi.

95. Broncano, 112.



from Buck Lanham and Hemingway's Bronze Star Citation in 1947—the Second World War, thus the positivity implicit in Linda's and Chick's words.

*The Mansion* was not the only Faulkner text of the 1950s to evoke Hemingway and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* in positive terms. Eight years earlier, Faulkner had woven Hemingway's name and work into Act II.1 of *Requiem for a Nun*, specifically during Temple Drake and Gavin Stevens's discussion with the Governor about a pardon for Nancy Mannigoe, who killed one of Temple's children and is scheduled to be executed in Jefferson. Temple and Stevens, like the policeman toward the end of "The Wild Palms," seem to be more Faulkner characters that have read a Hemingway war novel. Whereas the policeman in the earlier story merely suggests *A Farewell to Arms* in his question about promiscuity in hospitals, Temple and Stevens each make two direct references to Hemingway, relating to the sexual trauma and personal resilience associated with Maria and Pilar. Faulkner had attempted to do something similar in the early 1940s with the incipient script for *The De Gaulle Story*, when a character recalls having *For Whom the Bell Tolls* read aloud.<sup>96</sup> Unlike the never-made film, Hemingway may have read his own name in Faulkner's book, which he claimed was virtually unreadable and evinced more evidence of drinking than artistic merit.

Gavin Stevens, one of Faulkner's ubiquitous later characters, seems to approve of Hemingway's novel, seen in two conversational references. Stevens first notes the "vanity" of Temple's Virginia-aristocrat husband as he worries about his "gentility" in light of Temple's past. He concludes, "So forgiving wasn't enough for him, or perhaps he hadn't read Hemingway's book," which Stevens feels may have taught him about understanding victims of sexual violence. Stevens then discusses Temple's being blackmailed by brother of Alabama Red: "Because Hemingway—his girl—was quite right: all you have got to do is, refuse to accept it. Only, you have got to be told truthfully beforehand what you must refuse."<sup>97</sup>

Temple shares Stevens's knowledge of Hemingway's novel and admiration for Maria and Pilar but offers a more rich, empathetic view of them, neither of whom is a "girl" for her. Maria and Temple have memories of sexual violence, although Temple seems to have had more agency in the Memphis brothel, noting "I could have climbed down the rainspout at any time, the only difference being that I didn't."<sup>98</sup> While she is recounting Popeye's sexual depravity and her experiences in Memphis to the Governor, and perhaps trying to atone for her past perjury against Lee Goodwin, she wonders: "Because suddenly it could be as if it had never been, never happened. You

96. Faulkner and Furthman, 17–18.

97. Faulkner, *Requiem for a Nun*, 578, 587.

98. *Ibid.*, 569.

know: somebody—Hemingway, wasn't it?—wrote a book about how it had never actually happened to a g—woman, if she just refused to accept it, no matter who remembered, bragged.”<sup>99</sup> A few pages later, she remembers how

somebody paid by the week just to listen, which you would have thought would have been enough; and then the other baby came, the infant, the doomed sacrifice (though of course we don't know that yet) and you would have thought that this was surely enough, that now even Temple Drake would consider herself safe, could be depended on, having two—what do sailors call them? oh yes, sheet-anchors—now. Only it wasn't enough. Because Hemingway was right. I mean the g—woman in his book. All you have got to do is, refuse to accept. Only, you have got to . . . refuse—[.]”<sup>100</sup>

Temple reveals a sense of urgency as she dynamically recounts her past to Gavin and, more so, the Governor. Her dominant female narrative voice, though sometimes in competition with Stevens's, is suggestive of Pilar's and Maria's narrations in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, as well as of Drusilla's in another text of civil war, *The Unvanquished*. In seeking a pardon for Nancy Mannigoe, Temple paints them as “sisters in sin,” coupling their earlier female camaraderie as former prostitutes with a sense of necessary expression: “Somebody to talk to, as we all seem to need, want, have to have, not to converse with you nor even agree with you, but just to keep quiet and listen.”<sup>101</sup> From her view, Maria was a “woman,” not a girl, whose endurance after sexual trauma reveals her resolve and, despite some deference to Robert Jordan, strength as a character. Temple's and Stevens's narrative voices form a kind of dialogue in which they alternate making references to Maria: Temple's are first and third, Stevens's second and fourth. Temple's initial allusion to “Hemingway, wasn't it?” seems to trigger Stevens's. Maria and Pilar offer Temple—and by extension Nancy Mannigoe—a model of female resiliency, although Temple's efforts on Nancy's behalf are ultimately futile.

Both *Requiem for a Nun* and *The Mansion* indicate that Faulkner admired *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, perhaps in part because of its Faulknerian strains and more experimental stance. As he had done in *Pylon* and *The Wild Palms* in the 1930s, Faulkner embedded references to Hemingway in his language, whether a narrator's or characters'—as a Nobel Prize-worthy writer, object of the “hemingwaves” pun, *matador* to a Faulkner-figure's *aficionado*, or author whose experiences in and book about the Spanish Civil War his characters know and admire. Faulkner, then a Nobel laureate, seems to have opted for

99. Ibid., 576–77.

100. Ibid., 580–81.

101. Ibid.

a less biting treatment of Hemingway in his later fiction, in stark contrast to Hemingway's later letters to Breit and others.

*Requiem for a Nun* and *The Mansion* show Faulkner granting select characters an awareness of Hemingway's works and name, the latter text "reenact[ing] his lifelong conversation with Hemingway that reveals his perception of literature as a dialogic discourse"—an often competitive one.<sup>102</sup> Although reading these two late fictional references as peace offerings would be somewhat strained, they do show Faulkner—almost always the more toned-down and discreet of the two—striving for a more constructive intertextuality. These 1950s works are consistent with Faulkner's other encouraging treatments of Hemingway in the decade: such as his brief though appreciative review of *The Old Man and the Sea* and positive remarks about *For Whom the Bell Tolls* at the University of Virginia in 1957.<sup>103</sup> Despite his critical comments—as when decidedly not retracting his 1947 ranking while in Nagano and New York—Faulkner rarely shared Hemingway's professional insecurities. He seemed to see it as the more accomplished, decorated writer's job to avoid such backbiting and explicit opposition. Unlike Temple's husband, Faulkner had indeed read and learned from Hemingway's novel.

### WRONGLY WRITING *FINIS*

On July 3, 1961, the *San Francisco Chronicle* carried a brief story about Faulkner's reactions to the death of "his close friend and contemporary" the day before; for him, Hemingway was

One of the bravest and best, the strictest in principles, the severest of craftsmen, undeviating in his dedication to his craft; which is to arrest for a believable moment the antics of human beings involved in the comedy and tragedy of being alive. To the few who knew him well he was almost as good a man as the books he wrote. He is not dead. Generations not yet born of young men and women who want to write will refute that word as applied to him.<sup>104</sup>

Unlike Faulkner's previous positive remarks about Hemingway, this one is given without qualification. By praising Hemingway's artistic commitment and work, Faulkner offers his opinion of Hemingway for the public record. He asserts Hemingway's bravery—as man and artist—and certain influence on up-and-coming writers and on he himself. That Hemingway is "not

102. Broncano, 112.

103. See Gwynn and Blotner, 182–83.

104. Qtd. in Bittner, 247.

dead” is likewise significant. In their Nobel Prize addresses, each made the case for the writer’s immortality through influential and innovative fiction. Faulkner knew that he was a cut above Hemingway in terms of published books, literary acclaim, and awards in the 1950s, but these comments depict his worthy coeval positively.

Nine months after Hemingway’s death, Faulkner visited West Point in April 1962. As had happened in Oxford, Nagano, and Charlottesville, students asked him about Hemingway. This occasion was different, because Hemingway had killed himself the year before and Faulkner himself was increasingly ill, a mere three months short of his own death. For once, a student had not asked Faulkner about why he thought that Hemingway lacked courage. Instead, a cadet asked about Hemingway’s suicide—particularly whether he “had fulfilled [his] ambitions as a writer” or if “his death was an accidental death.” For Faulkner,

Hemingway was too good a man to be a victim of accidents; only the weak are victims of accidents unless a house falls on them. I think that that was a deliberate pattern which he followed just as all his work was a deliberate pattern. I think that every man wants to be at least as good as what he writes. And I’m inclined to think that Ernest felt that at this time, this was the right thing, in grace and dignity, to do. I don’t agree with him. I think that no man can say until the end of his life whether he’s written out or not. Probably that occurs to almost everybody at some time, that he has done his best, that this is when he would like to write *finis* to his life. I think that Hemingway was wrong.

The next day, a cadet again asked about Hemingway, “wondering if you know any possible reason why, after he seems to have regained his faith, he would then decide to take his life”:

The only reason I would undertake to guess would be that every writer wishes to reduce the sum of all experience, of all the passion and beauty of being alive, into something that will last after him. [ . . . ] I would say that there was a certain point that Ernest reached where he said, “I can’t do it, no man can do it, and there’s nothing remains worth staying alive for.” Or he could have been sick and in pain, and I think that that had something to do with it because he had spent a lot of time in the hospital. The last time I saw him he was a sick man. But I prefer to believe that he had reached that point that the writer must reach—Shakespeare reached it in *The Tempest*—he said, “I don’t

know the answer either,” and wrote *The Tempest* and broke the pencil. But he didn’t commit suicide. Hemingway broke the pencil and shot himself.<sup>105</sup>

Faulkner had rivaled and engaged with Hemingway more than any other contemporary, suggesting a common awareness that could take various shapes. While one can read Faulkner’s comments at West Point about Hemingway’s misguided suicide and “deliberate pattern[s]” of life and art as a postmortem cheap shot, he laments Hemingway’s passing. He also says that he “saw him” and he could have, although no biographies of either man mention Faulkner visiting Hemingway in Ketchum or at the Mayo Clinic—perhaps he just saw a picture or a news report. He was at least aware of Hemingway’s time in hospitals, mental and otherwise.

Regardless, Faulkner’s three public comments about Hemingway’s death reveal unguarded respect. He thought Hemingway was “brave,” “dedicated,” graceful, dignified, and talented; furthermore, he envisioned Hemingway as the influential figure in future American literature that he was. Like much of America, Faulkner felt the impact of Hemingway’s death. He “saw something ominous in Hemingway’s death, since the two had become famous together, the twins of American fiction from 1930 to 1950 or so.” Moreover, “Faulkner saw in the other’s death something of his own. It was not only the death of Hemingway, however, but the end of an era in American writing: the few great ones had passed,”<sup>106</sup> save perhaps Dos Passos, who died in 1970. Indeed, Hemingway’s death was something of a portent for Faulkner, who died on July 6, 1962, nearly a year to the day after Hemingway. With this, America’s most heated modernist debate between warring literary “twins” had completed its closing argument.

105. Qtd. in Inge, 186, 195–96.

106. Karl, 1037.

# 5

## RIVALS, MATADORS, AND HUNTERS

### *Textual Sparring and Parallels*

*What in hell is the matter with writers? Why do they have to be so goddamn touchy: I remember all E's touchiness and phobias and enemies and what-not. It seems such a furious waste of time. I find myself being a kind of Pollyanna and telling them to leave things alone and forget it, one hasn't time in this life to be so full of resentments and angers. Or rather, one shouldn't have them personally: one should use up that set of emotions on causes, and try to be a jolly person in normal life.*

—Martha Gellhorn to Charles Scribner, July 29, 1945

Artists of all kinds—writers, musicians, painters, and so on—have been known to influence and “talk” to each other through their work. One can look at similar tensions and exchanges between contemporary writers: Wright and Hurston, Ellison and Baraka, the “Men of 1914,” and numerous others. Such intertextual ricocheting creates a dialectic of competition and influence, often due to artists’ own efforts at one-upmanship. Some level of intellectual sway, exchange, and rivalry seems *de rigueur* in the arts, effecting linkages between peers whose work often engages with others’—sometimes with a rivalrous tenor, sometimes a respectful one, or sometimes both. Most all writers use their métier to dialectically respond to and connect with the larger culture: its historical events and personages, its social codes, its various cultural narratives, and its makers and works of art. As Gellhorn observes in this letter to Scribner, a writer’s “set of emotions” can be (mis)directed away from creativity and “causes” and toward a psychological engagement—or battle—with others. Writing a few months before she and Hemingway officially divorced, Gellhorn had seen such “resentments and angers” from Hemingway during their five volatile years of marriage, both toward other

authors and herself. It seems, judging by her observation about writers being “so goddamn *touchy*,” that certain creative temperaments resent others of comparable or threatening stature. Writers are emotional beings; it is, perhaps, only natural that the emotional demons fueling their work spill over into their interpersonal relationships. Hadley, Pauline, Martha, and Mary Hemingway knew it, as did Estelle Oldham, Meta Carpenter, Joan Williams, and the other women in Faulkner’s intimate emotional life.

From the early 1930s, when they were published together in *Salmagundi* and Hemingway took the first significant swing in *Death in the Afternoon*, to the 1950s, when both won the Nobel and Pulitzer Prizes, Hemingway and Faulkner remained a powerful presence in each other’s professional life. Psychocompetitively, each was the other’s most important coeval; each, in turn, was among the other’s most spirited critics. Faulkner, for Hemingway, needed less rhetoric and more editing (as long as it wasn’t Max Perkins’s), and tried to “write them all” while sacrificing basic clarity. Hemingway, for Faulkner, was hesitant to take chances, lacked *glory* and *courage* in his work, and thus was the *aficionado* to Faulkner’s *matador*. Indeed,

Faulkner felt that most of Hemingway’s work had been written from the wrong moral bases in a highly refined but essentially limited style. Hemingway felt that Faulkner had the most abundant natural gifts but that he had written too much, continuing when he was tired and then sometimes going on alcohol, adulterating the works with “tricks” and “rhetoric.” Hemingway spoke of “getting in the ring” with Balzac and Tolstoy; Faulkner would say you wanted to be “better than Shakespeare.” Perhaps the remarkable thing was that they expressed as much admiration for each other as they did.<sup>1</sup>

Their different lifestyles and aesthetics notwithstanding, their paths were intertwined throughout their long careers, from Hemingway questioning Faulkner’s productivity in 1932 to the praise, critique, and guarded “admiration” they articulated for each other for almost thirty more years.

The intense, richly intertextual 1950s culminated decades of sparring and debate about art and about each other. After Faulkner won the Nobel Prize and gave a speech implicitly critical of Hemingway, their debate crested in Hemingway’s correspondence and his own Nobel Prize address, which refuted Faulkner’s ideas. The period from 1947–1955 was the acme of their relationship, the almost nine-year period bookended by Faulkner’s ranking of Hemingway and their later commentary on it. This mini-era saw them write their only known letters to each other, Faulkner’s criticisms weigh most heavily on Hemingway, Faulkner publicly praise (but subtly disparage)

1. Blotner, *Faulkner*, 558.

Hemingway's work, and their personal lives echo each other poignantly and dramatically. Yet, their social paths most likely never crossed for any significant period, if at all. Their social distance belied their closeness artistically and psychologically. Perhaps to each man's chagrin, certain works open themselves up to a more synthetic reading, one privileging commonalities over criticisms. Some connections, such as their reverence for hunting and nature, were circumstantial; each man's father passed down a love of the wilderness, and part of each man's masculine code seemed to require them to be hunters. Other textual crossings were consciously or unconsciously psychological, such as the one Hemingway likely imagined during his penultimate trip to Spain, in the "dangerous summer" and early fall of 1959.

## MANO A MANO DUELING IN SPAIN AND AMERICA<sup>2</sup>

When he was finishing up "The Art of the Short Story" during the summer of 1959 and sniping at Faulkner in it, Hemingway was in Spain to cover the mano a mano bullfights between brothers-in-law Antonio Ordóñez and Luis Miguel Dominguín. First a story in *Life*, Hemingway's lengthy, psychologically weighted account of their summer-long series was eventually published in 1985 as *The Dangerous Summer*, which follows two craftsmen in another trade he felt gained its worth from rivalry. This posthumous work came out of an arduous time for Hemingway, given his failing mental and physical health, emotional turbulence, writing struggles, and fading career. His inner world was highly mercurial before, during, and after this trip to Spain: "Each trip down his emotional roller coaster took him deeper into his private demons. Each time down, it was more difficult to climb back up. But each time he recovered, his writing exploded." By the late 1950s, Hemingway had also been writing—but not finishing—what would become *A Moveable Feast*, *Islands in the Stream*, *The Garden of Eden*, and *Under Kilimanjaro* during "two manic periods of writing."<sup>3</sup> While he saw Faulkner publish a great deal of work and receive numerous honors in the 1950s, Hemingway felt slighted, despite his own reputation, influence, and awards: among them the Nobel and Pulitzer Prizes, the Award of Merit Medal from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and the Cuban Order of Carlos Manuel Céspedes.<sup>4</sup> Yet, "this avalanche of honors could not undo the damage. The aging, traumatized celebrity who followed the bulls in 1959 was very different from

2. Portions of this section were published in *The Hemingway Review* 28.2 (Fall 2008). My thanks go to Susan Beegel for her editorial advice, great support, and guidance.

3. Reynolds, *Hemingway: The Final Years*, 321.

4. *Ibid.*, 365–66.



the ambitious, eager young man who had followed them in the 1920s and early 1930s.”<sup>5</sup>

Hemingway was in Spain from May 1 to October 27, 1959, to follow Ordóñez and Dominguín, fellow bullfighters whose summer-long competition seemed to be a proverbial, contentious battle for preeminence. Closely watching Ordóñez and Dominguín for several months, thinking about his métier, and facing his own “aging” must have evoked Hemingway’s long-standing animus toward Faulkner. They too were comparably talented, stylistically distinctive craftsmen dueling, one-upping, and influencing each other. Whereas Hemingway does not mention Faulkner by name (as in *Death in the Afternoon* or “On Being Shot Again”) or by coded reference (as in “corncob” in *Across the River and into the Trees* or various letters), Faulkner is very much present in *The Dangerous Summer*, psychologically if not textually. The text is among the last he wrote revealing both Faulkner’s influence and the emotional drain of their intertextual rivalry—further evidence of George Monteiro’s claim that theirs was a rivalry “that, in the last analysis, showed neither of them to good advantage.”<sup>6</sup>

*The Dangerous Summer* subtextually, and perhaps subconsciously, recasts the Hemingway–Faulkner dialectic through its competitive tenor, remarks on craft and professional integrity, and evaluations of the matadors. The text’s competitive grid—one-upmanship, mutual evaluation, showmanship, and trickery—parallels the psychocompetitive patterns we have seen between Hemingway and Faulkner. The matadors are the writers’ psychological counterparts: Hemingway identifies himself with Ordóñez and Faulkner with Dominguín. His contrasts between Ordóñez’s and Dominguín’s styles, audiences, and successes echo similar contrasts he regularly drew between himself and Faulkner. Through this aesthetic lens, Faulkner and Dominguín use forms of trickery, while Hemingway and Ordóñez embody technical perfection, honor, and dignity. Significantly, the matadors’ one-two placement in the text differs from the writers’. Given his late acclaim, many awards, and prolific output, Faulkner was arguably superior, yet Ordóñez is the text’s better matador and Hemingway’s ideal. Whereas Hemingway was strong-willed and hypercompetitive, he often felt inferior to Faulkner during the 1950s when he himself struggled and the latter was more successful publicly. Hemingway’s personal and professional anxiety stemmed partly from their harsh intertextual and professional dialectic in which Faulkner received more public acclaim later in their careers, revealed in numerous correspondence of the 1950s as I have shown in Chapter 4.

5. Mandel, 3.

6. Monteiro, “The Contest between Faulkner and Hemingway.”

After January 1959, “[t]he next thirty months was the dark trip down” for Hemingway as he suffered physically and mentally, drank excessively, traveled to Spain, mistreated and estranged himself from Mary, and wrote “The Art of the Short Story,” the only work of his that Scribners rejected.<sup>7</sup> Digging “up his old grievance with Faulkner” often indicated that Hemingway “was on the dark side of his emotional curve,” where he seemed to stay throughout that summer and fall.<sup>8</sup> Hemingway’s “moody and depressed” nature during his time in Spain plagued his mind, marriage, creativity, and the somewhat manic composition of *The Dangerous Summer*. The manuscript reached 100,000 words by January 1960, was cut to 70,000 by A. E. Hotchner for *Life* in late June, and then vaulted past 120,000 words by early July.<sup>9</sup> The text “looks at all the challenges the artist faces as he labors to subjugate the resisting subject into art, and to communicate that art to the public.” As a “literary testament,” *The Dangerous Summer* is a psychological intertext that indirectly traces the Hemingway-Faulkner rivalry while directly treating the Ordóñez-Dominguín series. The text examines the competitors’ differing artistic styles and the “challenges” they posed to each other.<sup>10</sup>

At the intertextual level, Hemingway’s identification with Ordóñez in *The Dangerous Summer* countervails Faulkner’s use of *matador* and *aficionados* in “Old Man,” with Hemingway figuratively surpassing him, reclaiming his bullfighting lexicon, and somewhat alleviating his own creative troubles. At the psychological level, this metaphorical quelling of Hemingway’s writerly anxieties echoes Melanie Klein’s “projective identification” construct, which I want to borrow here: it is “based on the splitting of the ego and the projection of parts of the self, into other people” and stems from a weakened ego, “anxiety aroused by the destructive impulses directed against the self and external world,” and the “incapacity to bear anxiety.”<sup>11</sup> Projective identification echoes Freudian positive transference, sometimes seen in patients’ “dreams of recovery,” and it can “signify a wish to be well.” For Freud, transferring one’s anxieties outward suggests “the compulsion to repeat treatment” and an act of denial, in a sense: idealizing something outside oneself affords at best a temporary displacement of anxieties. Positive transference is underpinned by internal anxieties, which are still active, regardless of any outward transference and idealization.<sup>12</sup>

Spinning off Freud, Klein writes, “Projection [ . . . ] helps the ego to over-

7. Reynolds, *Hemingway: The Final Years*, 321, 327.

8. *Ibid.*, 324–25.

9. *Ibid.*, 337, 343–44.

10. Mandel, 73.

11. Klein, “On the Sense of Loneliness,” 303.

12. Freud, 112, 118.

come anxiety by ridding it of danger and badness. Introjection of the good object is also used by the ego as a defence against anxiety.”<sup>13</sup> A shield against internal insecurity and “badness,” projective identification comes out of anxiety, perhaps “of influence” in Hemingway’s case, insofar as a weakened individual seeks a connection with a strong one to allay personal anxieties. The “good object” for the Hemingway of *The Dangerous Summer*, Ordóñez epitomized true bullfighting craft: “he could make all the classic passes without faking,” “he was a genius with the cape,” and “had the three great requisites for a matador: courage, skill in his profession and grace in the presence of the danger of death.”<sup>14</sup> As both aficionado and textual persona, Hemingway found these traits emotionally empowering. Their friendship brought him further into Ordóñez’s *cuadrilla*—they were often together at restaurants, training sessions, hotels, hospitals, and Hemingway’s sixtieth birthday gala on July 21, 1959. Hemingway embraced this close connection; it garnered him more eminence as the chronicler of the *mano a mano* series and enabled him to identify with a matador whom he had respected and idealized.

Whereas *The Dangerous Summer*’s events and personages are largely genuine—if a little reshaped, as Mandel notes—Hemingway’s casting of the matadors, their rivalry, and their bullfighting techniques speaks in part to Klein’s notion of projective identification. His psychological link to Ordóñez rests not in the narrative proper but in his somewhat biased portrayal of the matadors and their ostensible rivalry. Hemingway’s remark in *Death in the Afternoon* that Faulkner’s stories are florid and deceptive anticipated criticisms in the 1950s of his literary trickery, some of which we saw in Chapter 4. He would say virtually the same about Dominguín’s affected bullfighting in *The Dangerous Summer*. Whereas Dominguín performed “the tricks the public loved and expected of him” in Bayonne and elsewhere and received rousing applause, Ordóñez embodied the technical perfection of form, getting applause from the spectators and, more significantly, the approval of aficionados such as Hemingway.<sup>15</sup> As Hemingway saw it, the “public” that loved Faulkner’s “tricks” included the Nobel Prize Committee, which awarded him the Nobel first, just as Dominguín satisfied his non-aficionados with his trickery and showmanship. Within each duel over craft and style existed one-upmanship and influence: each figure respected the other’s abilities, studied his performances, and answered with his own more daring performances.

For Hemingway, he and Ordóñez eschewed such showmanship in favor

13. Klein, “Notes on Some Schizoid Mechanisms,” 6.

14. Hemingway, *The Dangerous Summer*, 51.

15. *Ibid.*, 178.

of a truer art, hence the psychological link he wanted—and needed?—to cultivate. While convalescing at Bill Davis's La Cónsula after being gored in Aranjuez on May 30, Ordóñez asks about Hemingway's intermittent productivity.<sup>16</sup> After Hemingway notes his struggles—"Some days very well. Some days not so good"—Ordóñez uses variants of *write* to describe his own work in the ring: "I'm the same way. There are days when you can't write at all. But they have paid to see you write as well as you can," after which Hemingway notes Ordóñez "was very pleased, always, to call the faena writing."<sup>17</sup> Each feels an affinity with the other as a fellow "writer" and insider privy to the secrets and techniques of their respective crafts; for both, *write* variants underscore the paradigmatic aesthetics of Ordóñez's bullfighting, couple their crafts, and draw them closer to each other. Hemingway later describes Ordóñez's techniques artistically: he "made poetry of movement" and "sculptured his passes gently and slowly making the whole long faena a poem" at the Málaga bullfights on August 14.<sup>18</sup> Hemingway seemingly wants to feel that he and Ordóñez have "a good deal in common," since such an affinity could have displaced some of his own anxieties, recharged his creative process, and pushed him ahead of his literary peers.<sup>19</sup> As Mandel reminds us, Ordóñez's "unreserved love and admiration soothed an aging, testy man whose relations with his own sons were difficult (none of them came to his sixtieth birthday party), and his success gave Hemingway entry to the energetic and energizing world of youth and talent."<sup>20</sup> By Klein's model, the revitalizing Ordóñez is "the good object" with which Hemingway identifies "the good parts of [his] self" to screen out "persecutory anxiety"—his emotional instability, physical decline, waning creativity, and rivalry with Faulkner that both obscured his own accomplishments and depleted his energies.<sup>21</sup>

Like *Death in the Afternoon*, *The Dangerous Summer* depicts Hemingway as the über-aficionado and learned, privileged insider tracking Dominguín and (much more so) Ordóñez across Spain. Through this narrative ethos, Hemingway established Ordóñez as his paragon, metaphorically fused with him, and created a foil coupling: Faulkner and Dominguín, both presumably the less pure, dignified craftsmen. *The Dangerous Summer* crystallizes the Hemingway-Ordóñez and Faulkner-Dominguín pairings as the matadors' rivalry commences in earnest, but the bullfighters' staunch rivalry was

16. Thanks to Miriam Mandel's excellent work with *The Dangerous Summer* and Hemingway's time in Spain, I have been able to date specific fights and incidents rather easily.

17. Ibid., 102–3.

18. Ibid., 170.

19. Klein, "On Identification," 170.

20. Mandel, 4–5.

21. Klein, "Some Theoretical Conclusions Regarding the Emotional Life of the Infant," 69.

not particularly accurate. Casting the bullfighters as strident rivals is part of what Mandel identifies as Hemingway's "bias." There were "basic facts that Hemingway knew but did not communicate clearly enough to his readers: namely, that Ordóñez and Dominguín came from different backgrounds, had different personalities and styles, and were at different stages in their careers [ . . . ] They were not childish competitors for a prize; they were separate, distinct, and distinguished *figures del toreo*." Moreover, "No bullfighting season is a championship fight between two contenders, with a crown or medal or title to be awarded to one of them at the end. *The Dangerous Summer* treats the 1959 season in precisely this way."<sup>22</sup>

Ever-competitive and wanting to present a dramatic competition instead of a more accurate picture, Hemingway thus webbed mutual respect, psychological wariness, concern with the opponent's successes, and a larger sense of creativity as a competitive exchange. He criticizes Faulkner and Dominguín similarly, using variants of *trick* and stressing that he knows "how it is done" among them. He rarely doubted Faulkner's and Dominguín's innate abilities as craftsmen; rather, he condemned their showmanship, lack of discipline, and seeming trickery. Hemingway had disparaged what he saw as Faulkner's impure, overly rhetorical Nobel Prize address in, among other correspondence, a June 27, 1952, letter to Harvey Breit. Faulkner's work, though somewhat strong, was too showy; Hemingway felt he himself could produce better, purer work. Not surprisingly, the parts of Faulkner's oeuvre that appealed most to Hemingway were those that sound less Faulknerian and more Hemingway-esque: straight, realistic treatment of setting, imagery, and character; tighter, more disciplined writing. Hemingway claimed to prefer *As I Lay Dying*, *Pylon*, *The Bear* (perhaps not Part IV), and such stories as "Turn About," which he included in *Men at War*. In the June 29, 1952 letter to Breit, also discussed in Chapter 4, Hemingway singled out sections of *As I Lay Dying* and *Pylon* as perhaps Faulkner's best; for him, though, *Sanctuary* was virtually unreadable and *Requiem for a Nun* was flimsy and disingenuous.

As I have discussed in Chapter 4, Hemingway must have been tepid at best about Faulkner's using his name and referring to *For Whom the Bell Tolls* in *Requiem for a Nun*'s presumably overdone, undisciplined passages. Faulkner had mentioned Hemingway by name in *Pylon* and *The Wild Palms*, and he would do the same in *The Mansion*, published shortly after Hemingway returned from Spain. One of the four conversational references to Hemingway, Pilar, and Maria in *Requiem for a Nun* comes from a wordy paragraph of ninety lines, uses a lot of parenthesis and digression,

22. Mandel, 68.

moves nonlinearly, and indirectly juxtaposes Temple's dialogue and inner monologue.<sup>23</sup> Such style is definitively Faulknerian, hence why Hemingway favored a shorter, more direct presentation of Temple's mental state, not one he felt was written so complexly and showily.

In Hemingway's view, Dominguín had a similar repertoire of showiness, which weakened his talent and professional character. Having come out of retirement to compete with Ordóñez, Dominguín displayed ample skill and knowledge in Algeciras on June 15. Hemingway, though, frowns upon Dominguín's showmanship in the coming "dangerous competition":

I was sure after I watched Luis Miguel do his trick with the bull when, after preparing him with the muleta, he tossed the muleta and the sword aside and knelt carefully inside the bull's angle of vision unarmed in front of the bull's horns.

The crowd loved this but when I had seen it twice I knew how it was done. I had seen something else too. The horns of Luis Miguel's bulls had been cut off at the points and then shaved back to normal shape [. . . ] The horns looked fine unless you knew how to look at horns.<sup>24</sup>

While granting that Dominguín's work was "infinitely skillful and perfectly executed," Hemingway faults him for feigning danger for the crowd's pleasure while disarming himself, whereas Ordóñez confronted and created authentic danger.<sup>25</sup> Such showy maneuvers and dulled horns are a "spectacle" that degrades the dignity of the *toreo* and Dominguín's ability to compete evenly with Ordóñez, who never willingly resorted to trickery or subpar bulls. He and Ordóñez watch Dominguín to keep abreast of the competition's "parlor trick": "This was what Antonio and I called the truco or trick. It was a good trick but it was a trick. Luis Miguel's work had been so superior and so brilliant that he had not needed the trick."<sup>26</sup> In their shared aesthetic sensibility, both decry Dominguín's showmanship because it detracted from his innate ability, catered to the masses, and falsified the bullfighter's necessary proximity to danger.

Seen through several negative comments in his 1950s correspondence, Hemingway thought that Faulkner had created a similarly showy illusion in *Sanctuary* with his opaque description of the corncob scene. In Chapter 13, as Temple is held captive in the barn's corncrib, "[s]itting in the cottonseed

23. See Faulkner, *Requiem for a Nun*, 580–81.

24. Hemingway, *The Dangerous Summer*, 106–7.

25. *Ibid.*, 106.

26. *Ibid.*, 107, 111.

hulls, in the litter of gnawed corn-cobs,” Popeye approaches her ominously. Yet, she only thinks “Something is going to happen to me.”<sup>27</sup> We know that Popeye is impotent and sociopathic; we know that she is in a corncrib littered with dry corncobs—the narrator does not fully divulge what Popeye does to Temple until Chapters 23 and 28. In the latter, District Attorney Eustace Graham presents a blood-“stained corn-cob” first to the jury and then to Temple. This is the dramatic coda to “this horrible, this unbelievable, story which this young girl has told,” although Lee Goodwin is wrongly accused, convicted, and lynched for Popeye’s crime, caused partly by Temple’s perjury.<sup>28</sup> One could argue that Faulkner’s hinting at Popeye’s use of the corncob as a violent phallus adopts part of Hemingway’s Iceberg Principle. This, for Hemingway, was one of many examples of “how [Faulkner] fooled you the first time” and did not tell his stories “baldly.”<sup>29</sup> One could figure out that the “little black thing” is presumably a dried corncob by revisiting the “litter” image in Chapter 13 after reading Graham’s speech, but Hemingway found such deception disingenuous. Instead, he sought what he saw as the true “mystery in all great writing,”<sup>30</sup> such as the unmentioned war in “Big Two-Hearted River” from which Nick Adams seeks solace, or the somewhat cryptic reference to Faulkner in *Across the River and into the Trees* through two references to a “corncob.”

Similarly, Hemingway praises Dominguín’s unparalleled work with the *banderillas*, but qualifiedly: “Luis Miguel had been facile and talented in everything, was a great banderillero and what the Spanish call a torero muy largo; that is, he had an extensive repertoire of passes and elegant tricks, and could do anything with a bull and kill just as well as he wanted to.”<sup>31</sup> Still, he found Dominguín’s style suspect, because it detracted from the bullfight’s meaning and sanctity. Hemingway often uses *spectacle*, *tricks*, and *circus* to deride Dominguín’s style, suggesting that such techniques left him ill-fitted against Ordóñez. As he laments of 1950s-era bullfighting, “the public loves these tricks” that Dominguín and others performed:

Many trick passes have been invented in which the man really passes the bull instead of having the bull pass him, or takes advantage of his passage, saluting him, in effect, as he passes rather than controlling and directing the moves of the bull. The most sensational of these saluting passes are done on

27. Faulkner, *Sanctuary*, 249–50.

28. *Ibid.*, 379.

29. Hemingway, *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters*, 770; Hemingway, *Death in the Afternoon*, 179.

30. Hemingway, *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters*, 770.

31. Hemingway, *The Dangerous Summer*, 52.



bulls which charge on a straight line and the matador knowing there is comparatively no danger turns his back on the bull to start the pass.

Hemingway sees Dominguín as gifted but over-reliant on such tricks—not standing still, “controlling” the bull, and evincing a graceful courage but turning his back and creating an illusory danger. A true *pase* would have been “extremely dangerous” and required that “the bull [ . . . ] be controlled by the scarlet flannel the matador holds,” as opposed to what Dominguín, Jaime Ostos, and others often did.<sup>32</sup> In this view, Dominguín’s affected style pales in comparison to Ordóñez’s genuine, controlled grace. As he did with himself and Faulkner, Hemingway contradistinguishes the matadors’ styles. In this view of craftsmanship, one wants to identify not with a rival of questionable discipline but with an ideal of unassailable discipline and talent, done sometimes in response to inner turmoil, self-doubt, or psychological influence.

Having employed *spectacle* and *tricks* for Dominguín, Hemingway often uses *perfect*, *slow*, *beautiful*, *control*, and *pure* to elevate Ordóñez, fusing with him à la Klein’s projective identification theory. For him, Ordóñez was nearly perfect:

He could only fight as he did by having perfect nerves and never worrying. For his way of fighting, without tricks, depended on understanding the danger and controlling it by the way he adjusted himself to the bull’s speed, or lack of it, and his control of the bull by his wrist which was governed by his muscles, his nerves, his reflexes, his eyes, his knowledge, his instinct and his courage.<sup>33</sup>

For Hemingway, Ordóñez epitomizes the discipline that Dominguín lacks. He controls the bull with his capework and physical grace, confronting danger instead of feigning it with “tricks.” This echoes a similar criticism of Faulkner, whose “lack of discipline and of character” he aspersed in June 1952 while comparing Faulkner’s apparent creative fatigue to that which he sensed in Fitzgerald’s *Tender Is the Night*—both, Hemingway felt, revealed more reliance on alcohol than artistic control.<sup>34</sup> Hemingway implies that *he* has the discipline and character requisite for the true artist, having posited in *Green Hills of Africa* that talent, self-control, and conscience were some of the writer’s—and, by extension, bullfighter’s—necessary qualities.

One sees such stylistic restraint in “The Short Happy Life of Francis

32. Ibid., 51.

33. Ibid., 141.

34. Hemingway, *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters*, 772.



Macomber,” among many other stories. Ostensibly describing the landscape around Macomber’s camp, Hemingway makes a subtle connection between the aftermath of Macomber’s cowardice, the scene of it, and the awkward silence it engendered: “So they sat there in the shade where the camp was pitched under some wide-topped acacia trees with a boulder-strewn cliff behind them, and a stretch of grass that ran to the bank of a boulder-filled stream in front with a forest beyond it.” A short time later, Macomber remembers tracking and shooting the lion at a place Wilson earlier guessed was about “A mile or so up the stream.” Hemingway then writes:

Then they went down the steep bank and across the stream, climbing over and around the boulders and up the other bank, pulling up by some projecting roots, and along it until they found where the lion had been trotting when Macomber first shot. There was dark blood on the short grass that the gun-bearers pointed out with grass stems, and that ran away behind the river bank trees.<sup>35</sup>

These images seem to describe the same place—both have a stream scattered with boulders and are flanked by grass and trees. Hemingway may not have written that his protagonist looks at the surrounding forest, stream bed, and grass, but Macomber can presumably see them from the camp, since they lie so close. Macomber thus endures his personal shame and tense silence while in sight of the place of such shame. This excerpt is one of many that captures Hemingway’s stylistic control, here the measured description of the tension between Macomber, Wilson, and Macomber’s wounded self-esteem. As Hemingway saw it, his own creative discipline enabled him to subtly connect the camp’s unspoken yet palpable awkwardness to the surrounding environs. To paraphrase Hemingway’s description of Ordóñez: His way of writing depended on understanding the story’s psychological essence and controlling it by the way he anticipated the site of Macomber’s shame in a deceptively simple landscape description.

In Hemingway’s view, he and Ordóñez possess the disciplined sensibility Faulkner and Dominguín lack. He thus “takes possession by projection of” Ordóñez, creating “an extension of the self” that made him feel more empowered, less anxious, and superior to Faulkner.<sup>36</sup> This act helped him negotiate “the difference between what was and what was desired” in the Ordóñez–Dominguín *mano a mano*; he readily identified with Ordóñez’s moving technical perfection and beauty, exaggerating the differences between them

35. Hemingway, “The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber,” 7, 11, 14.

36. Klein, “Some Theoretical Conclusions Regarding the Emotional Life of the Infant,” 68.

and (implicitly) Faulkner and himself.<sup>37</sup> At Longroño in September 1956, for instance,

Antonio almost made me choke up with the cape. [ . . . ] [T]he kind where your chest and throat tighten up and your eyes dim seeing something that you thought was dead and done with come to life before you. It was being done more purely, more beautifully and closer and more dangerously than it could be done and he was controlling the danger and measuring it exactly to a micrometric proportion.

This is Ordóñez's way of "making sculpture," an image Hemingway later invokes when describing his pure artistry.<sup>38</sup> Such genuine grace was perhaps a kind of fourth dimension for Hemingway. As he described the aesthetics of *Green Hills of Africa* to Max Perkins, he claimed to write the text "absolutely truly. *absolutely* with no faking or cheating of any kind" to capture "all the dimensions[ . . . ] [T]o make the country—not describe it."<sup>39</sup> As outlined here and embodied in his signature work, Hemingway's art valued a truthful, clear prose, similar to Ordóñez's purity and beauty in the ring. Whereas he tells Perkins in the same letter that "after you have read it I think you will have been there" and that he wants a book to "make me see and feel Africa,"<sup>40</sup> Hemingway praises Ordóñez's transferring emotion to his audience, whereas Dominguín's "style did not move me at all."<sup>41</sup> For Hemingway, both the fourth-dimension prose and Ordóñez's bullfighting have a marked, desired palpability.

Hemingway also praises Ordóñez's *recibiendo*: "leaning in [ . . . ] so that the man and bull become one figure as the sword goes in after it until they are joined and the left hand, all this time, is keeping the bull's head down with the muleta low, low, and guiding him out of the encounter. It is the most beautiful way to kill[ . . . ] It is also the most dangerous."<sup>42</sup> Whereas Ordóñez was adept at "controlling the danger" in the ring, Hemingway was equally adept at "controlling" its description on the page. Decades earlier, before needing to feel energized by Ordóñez to reassert his professional standing, Hemingway had captured similar moments. In *The Sun Also Rises*, Pedro Romero, based partly on Ordóñez's father Cayetano, "let the bull pass so close that the man and the bull and the cape that filled and pivoted ahead

37. Mandel, 5.

38. Hemingway, *The Dangerous Summer*, 57.

39. Brucoli, *The Only Thing That Counts*, 215–16.

40. *Ibid.*, 215.

41. Hemingway, *The Dangerous Summer*, 54.

42. *Ibid.*, 58.

of the bull were all one sharply etched mass. It was all so slow and so controlled." Then,

Romero's left hand dropped the muleta over the bull's muzzle to blind him, his left shoulder went forward between the horns as the sword went in, and for just an instant he and the bull were one. Romero way out over the bull, the right arm extended high up to where the hilt of the sword had gone in between the bull's shoulders.<sup>43</sup>

The aesthetic parallels between Hemingway's description of Ordóñez's and Romero's performances of such dangerous beauty are clear. Both create a "figure" and become "one" with their respective bulls. Hemingway's imagery and short sentences slow down these "most beautiful" and "most dangerous" scenes, creating symbolic art-objects for narrator and reader.

Compare—as he surely would have—Hemingway's crisp imagery and direct presentation of Ordóñez and Romero to Faulkner's more oblique, though perhaps more avant-garde, imagery of a killing in *A Fable*. The latter's imagery is highly connotative in its describing an "almost finicking, even niggardly fatal violence like the bullfighter's" and being "fixed, as with one twitch of his cape the espada does the bull."<sup>44</sup> Assuming he read this part of the novel whose religious overtones he often criticized, Hemingway doubtless would have disdained Faulkner's bullfighting similes and long sentences: the first section above comes from a paragraph-long sentence of thirty-nine lines. Although Hemingway's "one figure" and Faulkner's "one gesture" slow down violent acts and suggest an artistic symmetry between staunch rivals, their respective styles are at odds. Hemingway's terse, staccato prose freezes the action, whereas Faulkner's effusiveness seems to speed up the action, even the act of reading. The above excerpt is typical of Faulkner and, by definition, contradistinctive from Hemingway's succinct, controlled style. Hemingway saw such verbosity, numerous clauses, and stylistic parenthesis as Faulkner's "tricks"; through a Hemingway lens, perhaps the "neat" image of the razor's "slash" is obscured by the wordy descriptions of the chase, aftermath, and the woman's slit jugular vein.

Through the same lens, Dominguín's unmoving style was far afield from Ordóñez's moving, genuinely dangerous style. While in Valencia in July, Ordóñez makes "long, slow endless passes that were like some deep music that only he and the bull could hear. He could always break my heart with the cape[. . . ] He had watched Luis Miguel the day before and he was

43. Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises*, 221, 222.

44. Faulkner, *A Fable*, 835.

showing the public and himself and us and history what Miguel would have to beat to win.”<sup>45</sup> After seeing Ordóñez make “every beautiful, classic and truly dangerous pass,” Dominguín goes “all out to win in his second bull [. . . ] It [was] spectacular and beautiful but [was] nowhere near as dangerous as passing the bull slowly by with the cape held in both hands” as Ordóñez had done.<sup>46</sup> Encouraged by—but a bit anxious about—Ordóñez, Dominguín resorts to his crowd-pleasing trickery and “play[s] with” the bull:

He stroked his horn and leaned on his arm on his forehead and pretended to talk to him on a telephone. The bull could never have answered but he could answer even less now that he was bled out and winded and unable to charge. Miguel led him through a few tentative moves holding his horn to help him concentrate and then he kissed him.

Now he had done everything he could do with this bull except propose honorable matrimony and all he had to do was kill him.<sup>47</sup>

Dominguín pushes himself to match Ordóñez’s style and example. Nevertheless, his “tentative moves” and undignified joking pale in comparison to Ordóñez’s brilliance, and he seems to lack Ordóñez’s “perfect nerves” and “courage.”<sup>48</sup>

Despite Ordóñez’s apparent victory in the *mano a mano* and the *mata-dors*’ differences, they shaped each other’s techniques, performances, degrees of risk-taking, and self-conceptions while competing for eminence. In this regard, such mutual risk-taking is analogous to Hemingway’s claim of risk-taking in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, as he wrote to Faulkner in July 1947. The novel’s interior monologues, multiple narrative voices, and stream of consciousness suggest Faulkner, and Hemingway equates such chance-taking with a more avant-garde aesthetic. Hemingway saw Ordóñez and Dominguín exert similar psychocompetitive influence over each other at Biarritz. Dominguín’s confidence and ego had been undercut by his injury at Málaga and by Ordóñez’s successes, and he can “only fake a proper kill.” He fights admirably, albeit trickily, yet “Antonio destroyed him mercilessly” and began to outshine the “crippled” Dominguín.<sup>49</sup> Hemingway had earlier anticipated such competitive chance-taking: “If Antonio was not paid the same he would increase the pace until, if Miguel tried to equal him or surpass him he would

45. Hemingway, *The Dangerous Summer*, 146–47.

46. *Ibid.*, 149–50.

47. *Ibid.*, 150–51.

48. *Ibid.*, 141.

49. *Ibid.*, 178–79.

be killed or wounded so badly he could not keep on fighting.” Attempting to match and eclipse Ordóñez could—and was—physically dangerous for Dominguín. To Hemingway’s mind, they warred over who was the better craftsman in the eyes of Spanish aficionados and each other. After Dominguín was injured in the ring at Bilbao, Ordóñez had to finish off his bulls, effectively ending their contest: “There was not any true rivalry anymore to anyone who was present in Bilbao. [ . . . ] But there was not any question anymore who was the best if you had seen the fights.”<sup>50</sup> Theirs was yet another duel between expert craftsmen who traded influence and techniques, with one effectively felling the other in an imagined contest.

Hemingway wanted to be *the* writer of the American literary scene, and projecting himself onto Ordóñez late in his career may have helped him feel such accomplishment. This victory may have only been symbolic. At his writing desk, Ordóñez’s inspiring style and victories were not truly his. Hemingway was trying “to equal [ . . . ] or surpass” the literary field; he wrote a lot of material, but he seemingly could not rein it in as he used to. “[F]ighting with imaginary demons” and [f]irmly believing that in his work was his deliverance,” he worked on *The Dangerous Summer* and *A Moveable Feast* feverishly, even manically, in 1959–1960: “Because he was leaving work largely completed but not quite finished, one or more books were always begging for attention. [ . . . ] As summer [1960] approached, Ernest Hemingway was a man pursued, a writer unable to outrun his demons.”<sup>51</sup> His creative “demons” must have revealed numerous reluctant truths to him: that his powers had waned, that his life and mind weakened his writing, and that his peers, Faulkner foremost among them, were still publishing. Since he had always wanted to outpace and duel other writers—Fitzgerald, Stein, Stendhal, Cervantes, and many more—Hemingway conceivably felt himself devalued in this self-imagined competition. To his mind, there were no draws in the writing game.



Klein and Segal provide a particularly apt parallel to Hemingway’s troubled mental state in the late 1950s, very much the subtext of *The Dangerous Summer*. That he was so emotionally and psychologically pained—as “periods of intense writing [were] followed by fallow, emotionally depressed periods”—late in his life indicates that Hemingway attempted to ease his creatively troubled mind by idealizing Ordóñez.<sup>52</sup> For Hanna Segal, “anx-

50. Ibid., 153, 205.

51. Reynolds, *Hemingway: The Final Years*, 343–44.

52. Ibid., 321.

ity” prompts “projection and introjection [ . . . ] to keep persecutory and ideal objects as far as possible from one another, while keeping both of them under control.”<sup>53</sup> Segal’s use of *control* is key. Whereas Hemingway wrestled with his personal problems, sporadic creativity, and professional competitiveness, he could to some degree control his portrayal of Ordóñez and separate Faulkner and himself.

*The Dangerous Summer* culminates Hemingway’s decades-long rivalry with Faulkner; its strong resonance with their dialectic dovetails nicely with *Death in the Afternoon*. Texts that doubly juxtapose writing and bullfighting and writers and matadors, they are Hemingway’s first and last book-length evocations of Faulkner’s presence and their mutual psychocompetitive influence. Like the mano a mano *toreo* between brothers-in-law that *The Dangerous Summer* maps, the intertextuality between Hemingway and Faulkner was “a deadly dangerous performance” undergirded “by perfect nerves, judgment, courage and art” in a craft that was also “worthless without rivalry.”<sup>54</sup> Hemingway’s writing and emotional health declined rapidly after the summer of 1959, and his two stays at the Mayo Clinic in late 1960 and early 1961 left him a brittle psychological shell of the man he once was. He does not seem to have read Faulkner’s positive references to *For Whom the Bell Tolls* in *The Mansion*, published in the fall of 1959 as Hemingway was beginning his efforts at shaping the Ordóñez–Dominguín narrative into a publishable manuscript. Indeed, this was a poignant emotional and professional struggle woven into *The Dangerous Summer*: a coda to decades of rivalry and shared influence in which Hemingway symbolically assumed the upper hand and launched his parting shot in their protracted intertextual battle. Despite Hemingway’s figurative victory in *The Dangerous Summer*, and despite both men’s late physical and emotional problems, Faulkner’s victory of sorts over Hemingway was not symbolic.

## TEXTS AND ANIMALS THAT RUN BOTH WAYS

The authors’ personal and artistic differences notwithstanding, their competing interests sometimes intersected—the two most prominent common themes being war and hunting. As discussed in Chapter 2, *The Unvanquished* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* reveal parallelism and influence in the context of internecine war. Likewise, their hunting texts show a similar resonance: they explore gender and racial identity, the ritual practices of hunting, the union of hunter and hunted, the thrill of the pursuit (perhaps more thrilling

53. Segal, 26–27.

54. Hemingway, *The Dangerous Summer*, 64.

than the kill), the importance of courage, and a veneration for the natural world coupled with the acknowledgment of its coming demise. What I offer in this section is a series of readings of Faulkner's and Hemingway's hunting texts, which share themes, imagery, character types, gender constructs, and an almost ecocritical consciousness. At the very least, this section might provide the foundation for further discussion, analysis, and contextualizing of hunting as means of connecting and contrasting the hunters *qua* rival authors. Hunting had a three-part significance for Hemingway and Faulkner: personal, aesthetic, and intertextual. Their texts of hunting captured what Faulkner in "The Old People" called "the unforgettable sense of the big woods—not a quality dangerous or particularly inimical, but profound, sentient, gigantic and brooding."<sup>55</sup> Relatively late in his career, Faulkner gave Hemingway entrée into these personified "big woods" in a late story, "Race at Morning," symbolically bringing a Hemingway figure into Mississippi as he had done in *The Wild Palms*.

#### *Mister Ernest in Mississippi*

An analysis of the conscious and coincident intertextuality manifested in their hunting works can begin with one of Hemingway's many criticisms of Faulkner. On October 14, 1955, Faulkner published *Big Woods*, a collection of four hunting stories interspersed with impressionistic interchapters, reminiscent of *In Our Time*, *Cane*, and other short-story cycles of the modernist era. Three of the stories had been published previously: *The Bear* and "The Old People" in *Go Down, Moses*, and "A Bear Hunt" in *The Saturday Evening Post* (1934) and then in Faulkner's *Collected Stories* (1950). The last story, "Race at Morning," was new, having been written in 1954 and sold to *The Saturday Evening Post*. Always willing and anxious to read Faulkner's work, Hemingway received a copy of *Big Woods*, appraising it to Harvey Breit on November 14:

Mr. Faulkner has sent me, or maybe it is only his agents, The Hunting Stories of W/F. They are not dedicated so I do not have to answer. But when you see him, which is inevitable, tell him that I found them very well written and delicately perceived but that I would be a little more moved if he hunted animals that ran both ways. File this under Snobhood: 1st Grade.<sup>56</sup>

Hemingway offers Breit more reserved praise about how the stories are "very well written and delicately perceived" but questions Faulkner's aes-

55. Faulkner, *Big Woods*, 126.

56. Hemingway, *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters*, 850.

thetic vision and use of bears and deer which, as he sees it, retreat but rarely attack, unlike the lions, leopards, and other animals that he hunted in Africa. Although he admits his own snobbery, he sets his personal and textual experience with African game higher than Faulkner's with bear and deer in Mississippi. Hemingway eagerly embraces the lack of communication between them, noting that he does not owe Faulkner or Random House any acknowledgment of receiving the book. He thought that he himself hunted more aggressive and dangerous animals, undeniable proof of his greater masculine courage and of "his contentious skepticism toward anything Faulkner said on virtually any subject."<sup>57</sup> What Hemingway does not discuss, though, is the use of his own name in "Race at Morning." Perhaps he, as Faulkner had done with *The Old Man and the Sea* in mid-1952, commented on his competitor's work without actually reading it.

As with all of Faulkner's hunting fiction, "Race at Morning" depicts the culture of hunting: pursuit (here, of an elusive deer), male camaraderie, drinking, card-playing, and an almost spiritual respect for the wilderness. This aspect of the hunt would be enough to compare Faulkner's hunting fiction with Hemingway's, but "Race at Morning" is unique in their mutual hunting oeuvre because it contains an unmistakable cross-reference. In the story, he—as they had often done—seemingly borrowed from Hemingway, not a theme or image but his name, used for the aged, half-deaf Mister Ernest who pursues a deer with the unnamed narrator, a twelve-year-old boy who becomes his adopted son. While Mister Ernest—not given a surname—is not supposed to be Hemingway as such, the name unquestionably evokes him, which is enough to envision a fictional crossing of the authors. In choosing his aged protagonist's name, Faulkner partly played off Hemingway's Papa persona. Mister Ernest is a widower who takes the young narrator under his wing to teach him the importance of hunting, school, and farming. Thanks in part to Hemingway's ubiquitous presence in the press, Faulkner must have known about his practice, while at home and abroad, of gathering a coterie of friends, admirers, and celebrities around himself and instructing them about bullfighting, hunting, fine foods and wines, and travel. Faulkner also seems to have sensed a thematic and gendered connection with Hemingway at the level of hunting, which is another implication of his use of "Mister Ernest." This choice of name may be coincidental, but the two-plus decades of intertextuality and professional awareness preceding "Race at Morning" suggest otherwise.

As we have seen with *The Wild Palms* and his Nobel Prize address, Faulkner had no qualms about reiving Hemingway's tropes for his own pur-

57. Monteiro, "The Faulkner–Hemingway Rivalry," 84.



poses, or weaving his judgments of Hemingway into his work—e.g., the *matador's* subservient *aficionados* in “Old Man” or the assertion of *honor, glory, sacrifice, and courage* as quintessential modern themes in his Nobel speech. “Race at Morning” breaks from this critical mold, because Mister Ernest is portrayed positively, if a little humorously. Granted, Mister Ernest is old and practically deaf—according to another hunter, the young narrator is needed to “do Ernest’s hearing for him”—but he has a keen body of natural knowledge that he passes on to the boy-narrator.<sup>58</sup> Thanks in part to Mister Ernest, the boy is a quick study in camp. Willy Legate remarks that the boy “knows every cuss word in the dictionary, every poker hand in the deck and every whiskey label in the distillery, but he can’t even write his name,” because he had not been schooled in the traditional sense.<sup>59</sup> In turn, the young boy holds Mister Ernest in high regard, suggested by Ernest’s being the only adult in camp whom he addresses as “Mr.” The two make an odd couple indeed, but they also depend on each other throughout the story: the boy guides them when Mister Ernest cannot hear, Mister Ernest instills in the boy an understanding of hunting, and they ride together on the same mount, which the boy names Dan.

As the hunting party begins its yearly “race” for the deer with hoofprints “big as a mule’s” and a rack of antlers “you could cradle a yellin’ calf in,” Mister Ernest and the narrator share the knowledge of the twelve-point buck’s whereabouts: “me and Mister Ernest knowed exactly where he would be—a little canebrake island in the middle of the bayou.”<sup>60</sup> Ernest knows the terrain and its inhabitants, as well as the deer’s location. In fact, he knows more about the deer in this story than Faulkner’s prototypical hunter, Isaac McCaslin, who makes a brief appearance. When the pair finally track the deer to within twenty yards, it first appears that Ernest has made an irreparable mistake: his rifle is not loaded, and both hunters watch helplessly as “the buck turned and give one long bound, the white underside of his tail like a blaze of fire, too, until the thicket and the shadows put it out.”<sup>61</sup> However, the boy later learns that the unloaded rifle was the conscious choice of an experienced, reverential hunter—one who seems to possess a “social conscience,” as John Howell has described it.<sup>62</sup> Ernest values their annual pursuit of the buck much more than killing it, just as the yearly quest for Old Ben drives the hunters of *The Bear*. The next day, Ernest and the boy return home and discuss the buck:

58. Faulkner, *Big Woods*, 176.

59. *Ibid.*, 175.

60. *Ibid.*, 178, 181, 178–79.

61. *Ibid.*, 190–91.

62. Howell, “Hemingway, Faulkner, and ‘The Bear,’” 126.

"Yes!" I said. "No wonder you missed that buck yestiddy, taking ideas from the very fellers that let him get away, after me and you had run Dan and the dogs durn night [*sic*] clean to death! Because you never even missed him! You never forgot to load that gun! You had done already unloaded it a purpose! I heard you!"

"All right, all right," Mister Ernest said. "Which would you rather have? His bloody head and hide on the kitchen floor yonder and half his meat in a pickup truck on the way to Yoknapatawpha County, or him with his head and hide and meat still together over yonder in that brake, waiting for next November for us to run him again?"<sup>63</sup>

Ernest venerates the ritualized yearly hunt in the same way that both his namesake and creator did, and as the boy ultimately does. There is a similar, though less drawn-out, master-apprentice relationship between Ernest and the boy as that between Sam Fathers and Isaac in "The Old People"; both elder hunters teach their companions about pursuit and valuing the natural world.

Because Mister Ernest appreciates aspects of the hunt beyond killing, he upholds the ritualistic values of the "big woods" seen in some of Faulkner's work and Hemingway's *Green Hills of Africa*, *Under Kilimanjaro*, and other texts. He and Hemingway had been actively challenging each other since 1947. Between his comments then and the October 1955 publication of *Big Woods*, Faulkner and Hemingway's competition was especially heated. "Race at Morning"—as "Old Man" had done two decades previously—symbolically unified these rival modernists, again in Faulkner's terms and in his home state. Faulkner's "rewriting [was] as important as writing. He was, at heart, a revisionist, concerned with retelling stories more than telling them."<sup>64</sup> "Mister Ernest" is consistent with Faulkner's larger aesthetics of rewriting seen particularly in *The Wild Palms* and his Nobel Prize address. "[H]e continued to borrow from, echo, and parody other writers even at the height of his powers," for instance his "creative depredations" and adaptations of Hemingway's work.<sup>65</sup> Here, he seems to have taken Hemingway's name, celebrity, and much-photographed love of hunting and revised them into a Faulknerian form and place, though without the tense competitive subtext of *The Wild Palms*. It is probably not surprising that Faulkner imaginatively united himself with Hemingway, because his personal masculinity, though competitive and occasionally aggressive, was not as explicitly belligerent. Though he—perhaps rightly—felt superior as an artist, Faulkner may have

63. *Ibid.*, 197.

64. Parini, 244.

65. Howell, "Hemingway, Faulkner, and 'The Bear,'" 115.

seen the depiction of Mister Ernest as a gesture of camaraderie between two aging writers. In the mid-1950s at least, perhaps it was Faulkner's job as the more accomplished artist to frame their relationship in more positive terms in "Race at Morning" and other late works. Faulkner, though, is still the framer, still the one with the creative energy to add a different dimension to his fiction.

This figurative textual fusion underlines the dual respect-superiority that he felt toward Hemingway. Surely, very few of his readers would not think of Hemingway after seeing "Mister Ernest" printed in the story's first paragraph. Because there is no overt maliciousness in the story, and because Mister Ernest is mostly admirable, Faulkner likely wanted to associate some of his own fictional hunting world with Hemingway and align them along one of his most enduring, fully realized motifs. Despite his disparagement of Hemingway in front of an international audience five years earlier in Sweden, Faulkner crafted the main character of "Race at Morning" as, in part, a show of respect for the man whose aesthetic agenda he often questioned. This gesture of admiration is consistent with Faulkner's more subtle, indirect mode of elevating himself above Hemingway. Adapting his coeval's name and persona in his own work, Faulkner assumed a kind of creative control over him, an act suggestive of how Hemingway's inclusion of "Turn About" in *Men at War* revealed both respect and competitiveness. As Hemingway saw it, Faulkner's hunted animals may not have run "both ways." Faulkner's competitive temperament did.

#### *From Mississippi Delta to African Savannah*

Faulkner's use of "Mister Ernest" in "Race at Morning" can suggest other exegetical links between the authors' hunting texts. This textual and imagistic parallelism spans several decades and is buttressed by the multivalenced importance they grafted onto hunting. In this section, I want to build on the work that Earl Rovit, John Howell, James Nagel, and others have done in this regard, to suggest that the authors' complementary hunting texts suggest a degree of artistic symmetry. Such parallelism does not point toward a direct psychological influence or conscious adaptation so much as a personal, literary, and gendered link between authors sharply attuned to the natural world. One such linkage is their analogous portrayal of hunters' culture and interaction. In *The Bear*, "The Old People," *Green Hills of Africa*, and *Under Kilimanjaro*, hunters interact similarly at day's end: drinking alcohol, eating fresh meat, talking, addressing new problems, and trading stories and memories of past hunts. In the midst of their characters' talking, eating, and drinking, one senses the masculine competitiveness and posturing between

hunters. In both “The Old People” and *The Bear*, Boon Hogganbeck is regularly chided for his poor aim and is contrasted with Walter Ewell, “whose rifle never missed” and who seems superior to Boon by virtue of class, manhood, and skill.<sup>66</sup> Likewise, *Green Hills of Africa* shows the hunters discussing who is a better shot or has killed more game; *Under Kilimanjaro* touches on a written—but largely unspoken—tension between the narrator and Miss Mary after she finally kills a much-hunted lion. As with writing and (for Hemingway) bullfighting, hunting entailed a healthy but somewhat serious contest for success, acclaim, and gendered pride. Their hunters routinely talk about game that has assumed the status of local legend: Faulkner’s fixate upon Old Ben (*The Bear*) and a huge, elusive buck (“The Old People” and “Race at Morning”), while Hemingway’s discuss kudu (*Green Hills of Africa*), a lion and leopard (*Under Kilimanjaro*), and an elephant (*The Garden of Eden*). Such talk of and obsession with particularly mythic animals textures the dynamic of the hunters’ communities.

These hunting communities are racially diverse as well. In “The Old People” and *The Bear*, the camp is peopled with whites, blacks, and others of mixed race—Boon Hogganbeck has Chickasaw blood, while Sam Fathers had a Chickasaw mother and black father. As much scholarship has shown, Faulkner’s hunting societies were both racially diverse and manifoldly hierarchized. Joel Williamson, for instance, notes how in *The Bear*

Faulkner made up a party of men whose blood represented the mixing of not two races but of three, men whose ancestry was not only both black and white, but white and Indian, and Indian and black. [ . . . ] Further, the Indian blood in the party represented both that of the aristocrat, a chief, and that of the commoner, a squaw. Ash, apparently, was purely black, and the other men were purely white but came from different strata in that society. The party joined youth and age, town and country.<sup>67</sup>

One sees similar diversity-within-hierarchy in *Green Hills of Africa* and *Under Kilimanjaro*, both of which show how whites, black Africans (from different tribes), and those from India (Mr. and Mrs. Singh in *Under Kilimanjaro*) interact in safari society. Expectedly, whites were ostensibly in charge and felt superior to their *other* companions. In “The Old People” and *The Bear*, Ash is effectively the camp’s cook/servant and secondary in the social structure. In “The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber,” Robert Wilson feels himself to be in charge of the safari by virtue of his status as the

66. Faulkner, *Big Woods*, 114.

67. Williamson, 415.

proverbial White Hunter, even threatening to whip one of the African boys in camp after the boy looks “curiously” at Francis after his display of cowardice, eerily suggesting the slave trade.<sup>68</sup> Faulkner fairly counterbalances this (realistic) Southern social hierarchy by imbuing Sam Fathers with superior natural knowledge. Although Sam and, relatedly, Hemingway’s African guides are seen as the whites’ social inferiors, they possess indispensable knowledge of the terrain, the animals, and their habits. Faulkner’s natural world, hunting, and the camp’s “highly ceremonial and rule-governed” hierarchy are a “symbolic extension” of “the codes that prevail outside the forest.” In this sense, “natural world is organized throughout by social orders” of race and class that have Major de Spain in charge of the camp and that *other* Sam, Tennie’s Jim, and Ash.<sup>69</sup> Faulkner, of course, thoroughly explored notions of race, difference, and racial hegemony throughout his oeuvre, and Hemingway’s portrayal of the Africans’ otherness in his hunting texts could beg further examination in light of similar racial portraiture in “The Battler,” “The Killers,” *To Have and Have Not*, *The Old Man and the Sea*, and other Faulkner works such as *Light in August* or *Intruder in the Dust*.

Another aspect of the characterization of the hunter in both authors’ texts is courage, either its presence or absence. Courage, both physical and moral, is central to *The Bear* and “The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber,” for example. In Faulkner’s novella, courage spans both human and canine characterization: it is important to the men who hunt and kill Old Ben, as it is to Lion (the large, untamed part-mastiff, part-Airedale) and to one of Isaac’s rat terriers, both of which chase and try to corner Old Ben. Isaac realizes that “it would take a dog not only of abnormal courage but size and speed too to ever bring [the bear] to bay”; he sees such resolve in Lion and his ratter, which was “itself not much bigger than a rat and possess[ed] that sort of courage which had long since stopped being bravery and had become foolhardiness.”<sup>70</sup> Both dogs act courageously. Lion epitomizes courage in his size, strength, ferociousness, and single-minded pursuit of Old Ben, and he cares nothing for other game or for the other dogs. Lion eventually helps Boon kill the bear, but at the cost of his own life. The hunters require a certain amount of masculine courage, too—they all track and seek to kill a fierce bear, which Boon eventually does with his hunting knife while straddling Old Ben’s back. This portrayal of hunting, like Faulkner’s fiction and public persona, has a decidedly masculine element.

68. Hemingway, “The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber,” 7. For an intriguing view of the racial and gendered dimensions of the story, see Anne duCille’s recent “The Short Happy Life of Black Feminist Theory” (*Differences* 21.1 [2010]: 32–47).

69. Evans, 187–88.

70. Faulkner, *Big Woods*, 32.

So, too, did Hemingway's, arguably more so. "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" examines gendered courage on the hunt through its presence and absence. The hypermasculine Wilson embodies courage and bravado: he knows how to hunt, he knows the land, and he has a larger cot in his tent "to accommodate any windfalls he might receive," testimony to his sex appeal.<sup>71</sup> In contrast, Macomber "had shown himself, very publicly, to be a coward," when he runs away from a charging lion, leaving it for Wilson to kill.<sup>72</sup> When he returns to camp, he is shunned by his wife Margot and upbraided by Wilson. Determined to atone for his cowardice, Macomber shows courage later when hunting a buffalo, though this act proves fatal when he is shot—perhaps intentionally, perhaps not—by his wife, at which point Wilson tacitly acknowledges Macomber's courage. At the end, Wilson seems to exert a level of power over Margot when he implicitly casts her as Macomber's killer and discusses the likely "unpleasantness," only ceasing after she tells him to "Stop it" at least eight times.<sup>73</sup> Unlike virtually all of Faulkner's hunting texts, Hemingway's story and several other works are not exclusively male, revealing a gender hegemony complementing the racial one discussed above.

Another personal quality that is linked with courage is fear, which Faulkner and Hemingway describe similarly, although in slightly different contexts. In a linguistic sense, *courage* and *fear* are binarily opposed but mutually dependent for their respective definitions. Like Faulkner and Hemingway themselves, *courage* and *fear* in this sense are not opposed but interdependent; at one level, we might think of one as the reverse of the other. In depicting characters' naturalistic responses to tense situations, the authors likened the presence of fear and cowardice to the taste of metal. In "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," when Harry looks back on his life while bedridden on his African safari, he regrets the experiences that he did not write about, one of which occurred during the Greco-Turkish War: "*That was the day he'd first seen dead men wearing white ballet skirts and upturned shoes with pompons on them. The Turks had come steadily and lumpily and he had seen the skirted men running and the officers shooting into them and running then themselves and he [Harry] and the British observer had run too until his lungs ached and his mouth was full of the taste of pennies.*"<sup>74</sup> While Harry tastes copper during a war and not during a hunt, both circumstances elide insofar as Harry remembers a different kind of hunting while on safari. Ill, unable to hunt, and feeling a lapse of courage in the face of death, Harry remembers a conflict in which he also felt fear. Hunting

71. Hemingway, "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber," 21.

72. *Ibid.*, 6.

73. *Ibid.*, 28.

74. *Ibid.*, 48–49.

is also key to the narrative—part of which Faulkner superimposed onto *The Wild Palms*—in that Harry is on safari with his wife when he badly infects his leg, which turns gangrenous, takes Harry's life, and symbolically denotes his moral and artistic decay.

In *The Bear*, a novella about a different kind of conflict, Faulkner compares fear to the taste of brass. As Isaac is walking alone in the woods tracking Old Ben without the intention of killing him, he senses the bear looking at him and then tastes "in his saliva that taint of brass," which again suggests some fear. Earlier in the story, before the hunters have Lion in their midst, Isaac senses the fear in the dogs who have seen Old Ben and are cowering under the cabin. After realizing that Old Ben has watched, circled, and accepted him as a woodsman, Isaac associates his sensations with the dogs' reactions to the bear: "[H]e recognised now what he had smelled in the huddled dogs and tasted in his own saliva, recognised fear."<sup>75</sup> Though he fears Old Ben, Isaac does so intelligently and without the cowardice Macomber displayed with the lion. Ever the astute woodsman, Isaac understands the power of Old Ben, and Faulkner portrays his wariness as the natural reaction of a true hunter such as Sam, Major de Spain, or he himself.

Besides the themes of cowardice, another textual parallel between Faulkner and Hemingway's hunting works is the interaction of humans and animals—the physical, even blood, union of hunters and their quarry. On Faulkner's side, one sees this in both "The Old People" and *The Bear*. In the former, twelve-year-old Isaac, in his third year on the annual hunting trip, finally kills his first deer. Accompanied by Sam Fathers as he approaches the slain deer's body, Isaac undergoes a rite of passage when Sam "dipped his hands in the hot smoking blood and wiped them back and forth across the boy's face," at which point Isaac is "marked forever" as a true hunter.<sup>76</sup> Isaac later sees the importance of this act, remembering how Sam "marked his face with the hot blood which he had spilled and he ceased to be a child and became a hunter and a man,"<sup>77</sup> ultimately the most knowledgeable and respected hunter in Yoknapatawpha County as "Delta Autumn" and two of the interchapters of *Big Woods* show. "The Old People," in turn, shows Isaac's beginnings when his masculine life is united with the source of the animal's life, thus forging a connection between Isaac-as-"man," nature, and his sharp understanding of it.

*The Bear* depicts a pair of triangular hunter-animal unions: first, between Boon Hogganbeck, Lion, and Old Ben in Part Three; second, between Sam,

75. Faulkner, *Big Woods*, 24, 25.

76. *Ibid.*, 114.

77. *Ibid.*, 128.



Lion, and Old Ben in Part Five after all three have died. We see the first human–animal amalgam in the final confrontation between the hunters, Lion, and Old Ben. As Lion finally runs down Old Ben and attacks him, Boon (an infamously poor shot) joins the fray with his knife, creating the human–canine–ursine union: “For an instant they almost resembled a piece of statuary: the clinging dog, the bear, the man astride its back, working and probing the buried blade. [ . . . ] It didn’t collapse, crumble. It fell all of a piece, as a tree falls, so that all three of them, man, dog, and bear, seemed to bounce once.”<sup>78</sup> Climactically, the man, dog, and bear blur into a single piece of “statuary,” where time seems to freeze and unite them, almost uncannily. This blurring is also suggested by Faulkner’s pronoun usage—“it,” not “they,” which denotes a single entity falling “of a piece.” Their respective paths all converge in a single moment, when the long-hunted bear finally meets his death, but not before mortally wounding Lion.

The second interspecies triad is symbolic rather than literal; it consists of Sam, Lion, and Ben, who are linked in life as well as death. As we learn in novella’s opening paragraph, “only Sam and Old Ben and the mongrel Lion, were taintless and incorruptible”; they epitomize nature, purity, and each other from the outset.<sup>79</sup> They begin to die at the same moment—once Old Ben is stabbed—and eventually they die within a few days of one another. Almost immediately after Old Ben is killed, Sam collapses in the mud, suggesting a natural connection between the bear and the seventy-year-old Indian man. Sam’s symbiotic link to the natural world is so strong that his life and death are intertwined with Old Ben’s, although Boon also had a hand in Sam’s death by, in effect, putting him out of his misery.

Soon after the final confrontation and Lion’s and Sam’s deaths, Isaac and Boon unite bear, man, and dog in death. Sam’s body is wrapped in a blanket and buried paces from where Lion is buried; in a metal box, buried in the same place as Lion, is “Old Ben’s dried mutilated paw, resting above Lion’s bones”—an image reminiscent of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (see my Chapter 2 and Howell’s “Hemingway, Faulkner, and ‘The Bear’”).<sup>80</sup> The three form a single gravesite, which Isaac later visits to pay his respects after Major de Spain had sold most of their hunting grounds to a lumber company, except for the gravesite. As the central consciousness of both “The Old People” and *The Bear*, Isaac is involved in these human–animal assemblages. He has the blood of his first deer smeared on his face, watches Boon and Lion take down Old Ben, and helps unite Sam, Lion, and Old Ben in death, later visiting their grave and sensing Sam’s presence there.

78. *Ibid.*, 65–66.

79. *Ibid.*, 11.

80. *Ibid.*, 93.



Hemingway offers a similar synthesis of human and animal in *Under Kilimanjaro*. The first-person narrator and protagonist, Ernest Hemingway, is asked to slay a leopard that had killed sixteen local goats. The narrative persona, whom I call “Ernest” here, intermittently tracks the leopard in the first few months of his safari, based on Hemingway’s own September 1953–March 1954 safari. After shooting the leopard out of a tree and realizing that it was still alive, Ernest and his African companions must track it. As they are following the leopard’s blood trail, Ngui discovers a piece of its clavicle; Ernest then creates the human–animal union:

Out of a clot of blood he picked up a sharp bone fragment and passed it to me. It was a piece of shoulder blade and I put it in my mouth. There is no explanation of that. I did it without thinking. But it linked us closer to the leopard and I bit on it and tasted the new blood, which tasted about like my own, and knew that the leopard had not just lost his balance.  
[ . . . ]

I bit with satisfaction on the piece of shoulder bone and waved up the car. The sharp end of the splintered bone had cut the inside of my cheek and I could taste the familiarity of my own blood now mixed with the blood of the leopard.<sup>81</sup>

Biting on the leopard’s bone and tasting its blood gives the Hemingway figure a natural understanding, as he learns that it purposely fell from the tree and is waiting for them in the thick bush. Ernest eventually kills the leopard, aided in part by his newfound connection with the animal. That the leopard’s blood tastes “about like [his] own” emblemizes a similar kind of human–animal link as we saw in Faulkner’s fiction. Although Ernest tastes the leopard’s blood, rather than having it smeared on his face as Isaac had, both hunters physically commune their prey’s blood, a symbolic transfusion deepening their understanding of the natural world.

Because some of Faulkner’s and Hemingway’s characters physically connect with and understand the natural world and its inhabitants, they lament any changes that the revered landscape undergoes. They were avid outdoorsmen and infused their hunting texts with rich, poetic descriptions of the American and African wildernesses. Faulkner opens *Big Woods* by focusing on the importance of place in the context of hunting, a passage reminiscent of the opening of Act II of *Requiem for a Nun*:

81. Hemingway, *Under Kilimanjaro*, 326–27.

*Mississippi: The rich deep black alluvial soil which would grow cotton taller than the head of a man on a horse, already one jungle one brake one impassable density of brier and cane and vine interlocking the soar of gum and cypress and hickory and pinoak and ash, printed now by the tracks of unalien shapes—bear and deer and panthers and bison and wolves and alligators and the myriad smaller beasts, and unalien men to name them too perhaps—[. . . ]*<sup>82</sup>

Faulkner describes Mississippi's wilderness in *The Bear* as "the big woods, bigger and older than any recorded document."<sup>83</sup> In both the novella and the above passage, the wilderness is greater than the sum of the trees, rivers, and animals that comprise it; it is a repository of life, history, and meaning that its true hunters, Faulkner himself among them, appreciate. His "hunting stories imply a mystical cycle of regeneration in which such large game as deer and bear are not only flesh and blood but spiritual representations of the natural world." Mississippi's woods are saturated with life, from the various animal species to the trees and high cotton. The above are just two examples of many in Faulkner's oeuvre in which the wilderness is described transcendently, likely in response to "a time of widespread environmental upheaval" in Mississippi in the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>84</sup>

Hemingway, too, placed high symbolic value on the natural world—recall, for instance, his lucid description of the wilderness in two Nick Adams stories, "Big Two-Hearted River" and "The Last Good Country," where Nick is immersed in the woods, in effect his second home. The wilderness was also important to Hemingway himself and his hunters, as one sees in *Green Hills of Africa* and *Under Kilimanjaro*. In the former, Hemingway's textual avatar connects the natural world to his own health, when he walks with one of his African companions:

I was beginning to feel strong again after the dysentery and it was a pleasure to walk in the easy rolling country, simply to walk, and to be able to hunt, not knowing what we might see and free to shoot for the meat we needed. Then, too, I liked Droopy and liked to watch him walk. He strode very loosely and with a slight lift, and I liked to watch him and to feel the grass under my soft-soled shoes and the pleasant weight of the rifle, held just back of the muzzle, the barrel resting on my shoulder, and the sun hot enough to sweat you well as it burned the dew from the grass[. . . ]<sup>85</sup>

82. Faulkner, *Big Woods*, 3; cf., Faulkner, *Requiem for a Nun*, 541–42.

83. *Ibid.*, 11.

84. Prewitt, 199.

85. Hemingway, *Green Hills of Africa*, 51.

In this passage and others in *Green Hills of Africa*, he portrays the landscape as therapeutic and moving. His narrative figure gains strength when walking in the wilderness, feeling the hot sun and grass underfoot. Unlike Harry in “The Snows of Kilimanjaro,” who is bedridden and thus separated from Africa’s wilderness, Hemingway’s narrative persona immerses himself in the woods, hunting, and exploring as he strengthens physically and mentally.

Since Faulkner and Hemingway ascribed such importance to nature, their descriptions of the natural world’s unavoidable changes are all the more emotional. Both the authors and their key characters realize that their hunting grounds are impermanent in the face of industrialization. Faulkner’s “Delta Autumn” marks the loss of the natural world throughout. The title doubly suggests change through both “delta” and “autumn,” given that “delta” marks the increments of increase and decrease in geometric variables and “autumn” suggests the change of seasons. Isaac, now in his seventies, laments the changes that industry has imposed on hunting and on nature, to which he is connected as Sam Fathers was:

At first they had come in wagons[. . . ] But that time was gone now. Now they went in cars, driving faster and faster each time because the roads were better and they had farther and farther to drive, the territory in which game existed drawing yearly inward as his life was drawing inward, until now he was the last of those who had once made the journey in wagons without feeling it and now those who accompanied him were the sons and even grandsons of the men who had ridden for twenty-four hours in the rain or sleet behind the steaming mules.<sup>86</sup>

Hemingway, too, was aware of how much his old hunting grounds had changed, seen in his and Philip Percival’s wistful memories of the “old days” throughout *Under Kilimanjaro*. Late in *Green Hills of Africa*, Hemingway had described how Africa is “finished”:

A continent ages quickly once we come. The natives live in harmony with it. But the foreigner destroys, cuts down the trees, drains the water, so that the water supply is altered and in a short time the soil, once the sod is turned under, is cropped out [ . . . ]. A country wears out quickly unless man puts back in it all his residue and that of all his beasts. When he quits using beasts and uses machines, the earth defeats him quickly. The machine can’t reproduce, nor does it fertilize the soil, and it eats what he cannot raise. A country

86. Faulkner, *Go Down, Moses*, 247.

was made to be as we found it. We are the intruders and after we are dead we may have ruined it but it will still be [ . . . ].<sup>87</sup>

Faulkner and Hemingway were (ecocritically) conscious of the vast, lasting changes that their respective lands had undergone as a result of industrial forces. Both passages tell of the destruction of nature and loss of trees, water, and game. They also note the detrimental effect of technology—cars have replaced mules as the mode of transportation to get to the ever-shrinking hunting grounds of Mississippi, while “machines” have intruded upon Africa and made safaris into popular excursions—ones seemingly less pure than the safaris Hemingway went on in the early 1930s and mid-1950s. We can also bring Hemingway’s language to bear on Faulkner’s story. While Faulkner does not describe Isaac and his companions as “intruders,” he nevertheless suggests throughout that the new generation of hunters does not revere the wilderness in the same way that the old generation and the authors themselves did, and that they do not understand how “ruined” it has become. Other than Isaac, the hunters of “Delta Autumn” are young and not at home in the wilderness, evincing little respect for it.

In a larger sense, Faulkner and Hemingway shared ideas not only about hunting but also about the world in which hunting takes place; their awareness of the importance of nature spans both their art and their personal lives, as both men saw familiar landscapes shrink or fade away altogether. Faulkner lamented in April 1957, that “the New South has got too many people in it and it is changing the country too much [ . . . ] [I]t gets rid of the part of Mississippi that I liked when I was young, which was the forest.”<sup>88</sup> Likewise, Hemingway, in the letter he wrote to Faulkner in 1947, displayed similar nostalgia for the changed landscapes of his youth, existing then only in his memory and in the unfinished work that became *Under Kilimanjaro*.<sup>89</sup>

#### *Isaac McCaslin and David Bourne*

Of all the textual resonance one can identify between Faulkner and Hemingway’s hunting works, the strongest is that between *The Bear* and *The Garden of Eden*, the latter begun late in Hemingway’s life and published posthumously in 1986.<sup>90</sup> For James Nagel, David’s story “has parallels to the story of

87. Hemingway, *Green Hills of Africa*, 284–85.

88. Gwynn and Blotner, 98.

89. Hemingway, *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters*, 624.

90. Hemingway began the project in the mid-1950s and left behind a considerable amount of material. My source for *The Garden of Eden* is the Tom Jenks version, first published in 1986 (New York: Scribner, 2003). While the published version was culled from the elephantine

Ike McCaslin” as “the maturation ritual of the hunt” sparks a moral development in both boys.<sup>91</sup> As a core tenet of their writing, hunting joins these two otherwise dissimilar texts through characterization, depiction of animals, themes, and imagery. As it primarily was for Faulkner and Hemingway, the world of hunting is almost exclusively a man’s world in both texts. There are no women in *The Bear*’s hunting scenes (save those Boon and Isaac see in Memphis) or in the portions of *The Garden of Eden* that are part of David’s manuscript about his early life in Africa. All of the principal characters and animals are male—Lion, Isaac’s ratter, and Old Ben (excepting one female dog who is wounded by Old Ben); Kibo and the elephant that David, his father, and Juma are tracking. In *The Bear*, the gender roles are clear-cut. For Isaac, hunting is a crucial part of his male identity as a rite of passage. His early hunting trips, “his apprenticeship in miniature to manhood,” entail drinking “brown liquor which not women, not boys and children, but only hunters”—which is to say, men—“drank.”<sup>92</sup>

Treating gender much more complexly, Hemingway depicts another male-centered world in *The Garden of Eden*’s internal text. For David, writing about an all-male hunt took him away from reality—namely, his tense, tripartite relationship with his wife Catherine and Marita in which the complexities of their transformative gender roles and sexual behavior impinge on his writing and mental wellbeing. “David writes of the elephant hunt nearly two decades after the fact, and even then the emotions of it are difficult for him to contain” seen in the textual “interrelationship” between David’s marriage and hunting and his use of the creative process as a figurative escape from Catherine and Marita.<sup>93</sup> In fact, his story becomes a preferable, male-centered reality, which he has until Catherine destroys it and his other manuscripts. As David writes in a private study separate from his hotel room, the two women, and their sexual activities, he is so immersed in his work that his time hunting in Africa becomes “the real time”:

But the half past ten was on the watch on his wrist as he looked at it in the room where he sat at a table feeling the breeze from the sea now and the real time was evening and he was sitting against the yellow gray base of a tree with a glass of whiskey and water in his hand and the rolled figs swept away

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manuscript of over 200,000 words and differs substantially from the manuscript (see Robert Fleming’s *The Face in the Mirror*, Chapter 5, *passim*), the Scribner version is the most accessible in this context. Adding the authors’ manuscripts to a study of their intertextuality is beyond the practical scope of this project at present.

91. Nagel, “The Hunting Story in *The Garden of Eden*,” 331.

92. Faulkner, *Big Woods*, 15, 12.

93. Nagel, “The Hunting Story in *The Garden of Eden*,” 330–31.

watching the porters butchering out the Kongoni he had shot in the first grassy swale they passed before they came to the river.<sup>94</sup>

This “formative event of his youth was the African hunting trip with his father,” Nagel posits, reminds him of the simple, clear-cut, nearly primeval masculine world he knew in Africa as a boy.<sup>95</sup> Later, as David finishes another morning of writing—by definition a process excluding Catherine and Marita—he was “still feeling Africa to be completely real and all of this where he was to be unreal and false.”<sup>96</sup> For Robert Fleming, David’s self-created African reality becomes more realistic, more true, than his current life in France while bringing into conflict “his identity as a writer” with “his identity as her husband” for Catherine. As Carl Eby posits in his persuasive psychoanalytical study of Hemingway’s treatment of gender and sexual fluidity, “[g]ender affiliation, however, is never stable in this novel.”<sup>97</sup> Given “the primary rift in his sense of gender identity and in the basic structure of his ego,” Eby continues, David is more comfortable when writing of an exclusively male world in Africa where he, his father, Juma, and his dog hunt a bull elephant, as opposed to his lived reality in France with its women, attendant marital complications, gender volatility, and sexual play.<sup>98</sup> Hemingway’s “examination of the effects of writing on a marriage from a male writer’s point of view” reveals how David’s writing about a homosocial series of episodes exacerbates such deleterious effects on his marriage.<sup>99</sup>

The “fraternity of hunters” Isaac joins in Mississippi at age ten is analogous to the slightly smaller “fraternity” of David, his father, and Juma.<sup>100</sup> Within these homosocial hunting worlds, some of Faulkner’s and Hemingway’s characters share other elements besides their genders and maturation in all-male hunting groups. Isaac and David are young men at the time of their respective hunts and learn from the older hunters. Each boy is also the prevailing narrative consciousness of his respective text, in the process showing the reader how impressionable, observant, and sensitive to his surroundings he is. In turn, both boys are part of hunting parties that have dogs whose names suggest Africa, as Hilary K. Justice has discussed.<sup>101</sup> The principal dog in *The Bear* is Lion, whom Sam captures and trains and whom

94. Hemingway, *The Garden of Eden*, 139.

95. Nagel, “The Hunting Story in *The Garden of Eden*,” 331.

96. Hemingway, *The Garden of Eden*, 174.

97. Fleming, *The Face in the Mirror*, 148; Eby, 164.

98. Eby, 186.

99. Fleming, *The Face in the Mirror*, 142.

100. Williamson, 415.

101. See Hilary K. Justice, *The Bones of the Others: The Hemingway Text from the Lost Manuscripts to the Posthumous Novels* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2006).

Boon ostensibly controls; “Lion” was also the title of an early version of *The Bear*. David’s dog is named Kibo Mawenzi, the African name for Mount Kilimanjaro.<sup>102</sup> That Isaac and David undergo similar formative experiences in their growth is further textual and gendered parallelism suggesting that Faulkner and Hemingway shared a sense of hunting as a crucial part of the masculine identity, both their own and their characters’. Even though they did so with different degrees of publicity, the authors coupled their art with their constructions of the masculine, to the effect that Isaac and David’s maturation as men and hunters telescopes aspects of their own.

Isaac and David serve wilderness apprenticeships to older, *othered* men—respectively, Sam Fathers, who taught Isaac how to hunt and navigate the terrain, and Juma, who “had always been David’s best friend and had taught him to hunt.”<sup>103</sup> Sam and Juma are also the voices of reason, knowledge, and experience. They know their respective lands the best, they have a keen sense of their prey, and they are the hunters’ liaisons to the natural world. Both Sam and Juma are wounded during the final confrontation with *the* hunted animal: Sam collapses as Old Ben is finally felled and dies soon thereafter, and Juma is charged and thrown by the elephant, an encounter that Juma survives, though badly wounded.

Both texts center on the pursuit and eventual death of an animal of mythic stature—Old Ben and an elephant.<sup>104</sup> The hunters in each text track the animal by footprints (which are crooked in Old Ben’s case) and other telltale signs (crushed undergrowth, scratched logs). When they meet their respective deaths, Old Ben and the elephant are compared to falling trees. Old Ben, Lion, and Boon fall “as a tree falls,” while the elephant “seemed to sway like a felled tree and came smashing down” after David’s father shoots him twice.<sup>105</sup> Likewise, Isaac and David undergo symbolic unions with each respective animal, similar to the human–animal intersections discussed above. One summer, after Isaac has heard stories of Old Ben, he explores the woods on his own and happens upon the bear, but only after purifying himself by abandoning his gun, watch, compass, clothes, and walking stick—all accoutrements of human civilization that hindered his primordial union with the natural world. Approaching a tree where he once encountered the bear with Sam and his rat terrier, Isaac discovers Old Ben’s fresh prints as

102. Hemingway, *The Garden of Eden*, 163.

103. *Ibid.*, 171.

104. One can draw a similar parallel between Old Ben and the fabled lion (termed “Miss Mary’s lion”) in *Under Kilimanjaro*. Both have killed many other animals (horses and goats among them) and are local legends that become the focus of the hunt. Both show signs of previous hunts. Old Ben and the lion both have unique footprints (either “crooked” or “scarred”) and are marked by their respective hunters’ weapons.

105. Faulkner, *Big Woods*, 66; Hemingway, *The Garden of Eden*, 199.

“the wilderness coalesced” and all goes eerily silent:

Then he saw the bear. It did not emerge, appear: it was just there, immobile, fixed in the green and windless noon’s hot dappling, not as big as he had dreamed but as big as he had expected, bigger, dimensionless against the dappled obscurity, looking at him. Then it moved. It crossed the glade without haste, walking for an instant into the sun’s full glare and out of it, and stopped again and looked back at him across one shoulder. Then it was gone. It didn’t walk in to the woods. It faded, sank back into the wilderness [. . . ]<sup>106</sup>

At this point, Old Ben has accepted Isaac through a natural ritual. There is no call for fear or worry on Isaac’s part, since the object of this ritual was not for Old Ben to intimidate or attack Isaac but for them to see each other without any unnatural elements. By engaging with Old Ben in his natural habitat in a state of utmost purity, Isaac is further initiated into what Faulkner and Hemingway may have seen—or, at least, sought—as the true wilderness.

David undergoes a similar ritual initiation with the elephant. When in bed with Catherine in their Riviera hotel, a dream of Africa wakes him, and he “went direct from that dream to work.” David writes of his past nighttime encounter with the elephant:

His arm was around the dog’s neck now and he could feel him shivering. All of the night sounds had stopped. They did not hear the elephant and David did not see him until the dog turned his head and seemed to settle into David. Then the elephant’s shadow covered them and he moved past making no noise at all and they smelled him in the light wind that came down from the mountain. He smelled strong but old and sour and when he was past David saw that the left tusk was so long it seemed to reach the ground. [. . . ]

The two of them followed the elephant until he came to an opening in the trees. He stood there moving his huge ears. His bulk was in the shadow but the moon would be on his head. [. . . ] The right tusk was as thick as his own thigh and it curved down almost to the ground.<sup>107</sup>

After seeing the elephant, David tells Juma and his father of its approximate whereabouts, allowing them to track his course and David to feel a strong connection to him. This scene is reminiscent of that in *The Bear*: the human–animal encounters are in secluded, silent areas, are momentary interspe-

106. Faulkner, *Big Woods*, 30.

107. Hemingway, *The Garden of Eden*, 159–60.



cies crossings, and contribute to the boys' understanding of the wilderness and of the hunted animal. Both Isaac and David are unarmed, having left, respectively, their rifle and spears elsewhere; both scenes suggest an uncorrupted connection that goes beyond hunting, a figurative bonding between a young boy and an old, legendary male animal. As two initiates into the natural world, Isaac and David come to understand their animals as sentient beings, not simply mindless beasts. David's hesitation about killing the elephant might also suggest Mister Ernest's refusal to kill the deer in "Race at Morning." For both, the animal's survival means a desire and respect for hunt's continuation. David regrets that he told his father and Juma of the elephant's location, sensing its impending death at their hands. Hemingway was working on *The Garden of Eden* and a number of other projects in the mid- to late 1950s, and Faulkner's work may have left a mark on him, or given him another theme to reshape in his own work. As do Santiago in *The Old Man and the Sea* and David Hudson in *Islands in the Stream*, David Bourne "begins to realize the full emotional investment he has in the animal his father regards only as prey";<sup>108</sup> the same is true of Isaac's and Sam's regard for Old Ben.

After his father shoots the elephant, David makes eye contact with the animal: "He did not move but his eye was alive and looked at David. He had very long eyelashes and his eye was the most alive thing David had ever seen." Throughout the pursuit and eventual killing of the elephant, David feels sympathetic toward the elephant, which becomes "his hero" in a further connection between human and animal.<sup>109</sup> Like David, Isaac, Mister Ernest, and Faulkner's other hunters would know that "the pursuit of large game reaffirmed a bond between humans and the natural world," seeking the perpetual sustenance of such a "bond."<sup>110</sup> As Nick Adams would do in a handful of stories, Isaac and David begin their personal, natural, and social maturation in their respective stories. They learn much from their native guides about the importance of the wilderness and the ethics of the hunt, knowledge that, presumably, Faulkner and Hemingway themselves had in common both socially and gendered. Both authors understood the experiences essential to the young hunters' personal growth because they had undergone comparable experiences as boys with an appreciation of the natural world and with fathers equally appreciative of nature, grafting at some level their own experiences onto Isaac's and David's. This mutual spiritual awareness points toward how their similarities could counterbalance their competitive differences, at least where their hunting aesthetic was involved.

108. Nagel, "The Hunting Story in *The Garden of Eden*," 333.

109. Hemingway, *The Garden of Eden*, 199, 201.

110. Prewitt, 204.

The reverberations between *The Bear* and *The Garden of Eden* culminate the wealth of links between Faulkner and Hemingway concerning the hunt, where their competing works intersected and resonated. Predictably, Hemingway took issue with Faulkner's aesthetic preferences, including his choice of animals, regarding lions, rhinos, and elephants as superior to bear and deer. Hemingway and Faulkner had their differences—which they eagerly articulated—but their thematic similarities are equally pertinent in painting their complex dynamic of one-upmanship and psychological influence accurately. Their personal experiences and frequent disagreements aside, their hunting texts and personae reveal numerous parallels, which Malcolm Cowley noted in the 1940s and which numerous scholars have studied since. Although Faulkner and Hemingway would have hunted and written about the hunt without each other's presence or example, there seems to be a mutual awareness of each other's hunting aesthetic, if not a degree of influence. Faulkner had admired, as he termed it in a few cases, Hemingway's "African stuff," elements of which may left some mark on him—perhaps helped by his owning Hemingway's *Green Hills of Africa* and *The Short Stories*.<sup>111</sup> This may have in part psychocompetitively driven him to offer his own better spin on ideas of hunting, the wilderness, and courage in his work and home state. Likewise, Hemingway praised *The Bear* on more than one occasion, so he may have tried to one-up Faulkner by reshaping parts of the novella in *The Garden of Eden*—using similar human–animal interaction, young wilderness initiates and their dogs, and all-male hunting parties while still telling his own story in a key Hemingway place. They did not inspire one another to depict hunting, but we can say that they motivated each other to innovate, personalize, and experiment with their own works, partly due to a strong quest for repeated one-upmanship. Faulkner and Hemingway wanted to outwrite each other, and this drive toward innovation seems to have resulted in thematic and textual echoes of one another's writings, seen here and elsewhere in this study.

Although Hemingway was much more photographed and celebrated as a hunter, both he and Faulkner had woven hunting into their masculine personae. Lifelong hunters and outdoorsmen themselves, in addition to their other roles (writer, wounded veteran, father, husband, lover, literary competitor), they viewed hunting symbolically, almost spiritually. Faulkner shared what Scott Donaldson has termed Hemingway's "worship of the natural world," a certain "glory" grafted onto nature.<sup>112</sup> Their hunting grounds were geographically diverse: Mississippi, Virginia, the American West, and

111. Blotner, *William Faulkner's Library*, 36.

112. Donaldson, *By Force of Will*, 240.

Africa. Both revered hunting's codes and ethics and, more generally, those of the natural world. They hunted with celebrities and locals: from Gary Cooper and Clark Gable to Africans, European guides (Philip Percival), and Mississippians (Red Brite and Ike Roberts). They never hunted together but bestowed vast importance on hunting, which linked their competing personal and artistic lives and counterpointed their rivalry's bitter intensity.

## DESCENDANTS AND ANCESTORS

As their competition decrescendoed by the late 1950s, Faulkner and Hemingway were far from their post–World War One days in New Orleans and Chicago with Sherwood Anderson, and from their wounded veteran–bohemian posturing in Oak Park, Oxford, and Europe. Yet, they had for decades seen and treated each other with similar, though more protracted, professional hyperconsciousness and intertextual competition. Each of course achieved wide influence and prominence. Ralph Ellison (who regularly claimed Faulkner and Hemingway as two of his literary “ancestors”),<sup>113</sup> Ellison's good friend and colleague Albert Murray, Shelby Foote, Tim O'Brien, Cormac McCarthy, and a host of others would all locate themselves within the sphere of Faulkner and Hemingway's influence. Theirs was one of the most nuanced and intriguing artistic rivalries in the American canon, one that reveals “a recognition of the pervasive influence of their work and personalities,” on their peers, heirs, and each other.<sup>114</sup> In *Intertextual Dynamics within the Literary Group*, Dennis Brown notes that “meanings” in such a self-created intertextual dynamic “are built up in intergroup participation, influence and struggle.”<sup>115</sup> Likewise, the longstanding interaction between Hemingway and Faulkner is richly meaningful. Each “influence[d]” and readily “struggle[d]” with the other throughout his career, creating a strong resonance between their writings and artistic philosophies, despite their lack of a social relationship. At some level, their intensely competitive relationship was stronger because its only outlet for their feelings and attitudes about each other was their writing, their sole debating platform on which they expressed all positive and negative assessments of each other.

113. Ellison, though, took issue with what he saw as Hemingway's misreading of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* in *Green Hills of Africa*, as well as Hemingway's limited portrayal of black characters in his fiction. Whereas Ellison the fictionist seemingly embraced Hemingway, Ellison the essayist and public intellectual eagerly debated him in several pieces in *Shadow and Act* (1964) and *Going to the Territory* (1986).

114. Rovit, “The Hemingway–Faulkner Generation.”

115. Brown, 3.

His possibly justified feelings of superiority notwithstanding, Faulkner always sensed a connection between himself and Hemingway, one that Anderson inadvertently—but significantly—engendered. Late in his life, a long time from his 1920s parodies of Anderson, Faulkner fondly recalled his mentor's impact. In August 1955, he remarked to his audience in Nagano, Japan, "I think that he was the father of all of my works, of Hemingway, Fitzgerald, etc., all of them—we were influenced by him. He showed us the way."<sup>116</sup> A year later, he told Jean Stein of the *Paris Review* that Anderson "was the father of my generation of American writers and the tradition of American writing which our successors will carry on. He has never received his proper evaluation. Dreiser is his older brother and Mark Twain is the father of them both."<sup>117</sup> In Faulkner's literary genealogy, he and Hemingway were artistic siblings nurtured by Anderson, giving further significance to the fraternal language in their summer 1947 letters. As symbolic modernist doubles—at least in their 1947 correspondence—they sometimes shared and sometimes pushed each other out of the American literary spotlight. In this sense, imagined fraternity and real rivalry are not mutually exclusive: the authors occasionally felt a writerly connection but more often felt the desire to outperform each other, their craft simultaneously allying and pitting them against one another. In their own ways, Faulkner and Hemingway sought after—and frequently achieved—the perfection of craft for which all artists strive in one another's shadow.

## EPILOGUE

*September 1947.* Hemingway and Toby Bruce, one of his closest Key West friends, are in Hemingway's new blue Buick Roadmaster en route to northern Michigan and then Idaho. At Hemingway's request, they add a destination to their trip—Oxford, Mississippi. He and Bruce pull into Oxford with the hopes of running into Faulkner, but they leave without meeting him when they realize that he was being feted that very day. Hemingway would have wanted little to do with anything that celebrated Faulkner, especially with Faulkner's recent fourth-place ranking of him still echoing in his mind. As H. R. Stoneback has observed of this near meeting of strident rivals, "There is no more poignant moment in American literary history."<sup>118</sup> Because Hemingway and Bruce left Oxford without running into Faulkner, we can

116. Qtd. in Meriwether and Millgate, 101.

117. Qtd. in Cowley, *Writers at Work*, 135.

118. Stoneback, "Freedom and Motion, Place and Placelessness," 215.

only imagine what would have happened if they had spent time together at Rowan Oak—talking about their trade or Faulkner's rating, having a few drinks, maybe going on an impromptu hunt in Mississippi's wilderness, or perhaps discussing the duel that Hemingway had envisioned in his letter to Faulkner in July of that year. Bruce also recollected that there were a handful of other times that Hemingway talked of making the same detour "to the Capitol of Place in American literature," but they never did so.<sup>119</sup> One must wonder what two writers with such strong artistic egos would have talked about or how they would have interacted had they been in each other's presence in what was clearly Faulkner's place. Had they met on that September day when Hemingway and Bruce made their detour to Oxford, Faulkner and Hemingway probably would have debated, among other things, their respective quests for accomplishment, quests that oftentimes clashed with, sometimes mirrored, and continually informed each other.

119. *Ibid.*



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